

**Second-Career Adults: Issues Encountered in Teacher Education Programs**

**John J. Gadoua, B.A., B.Ed., B.Ed. AED.**

**Department of Graduate and Undergraduate**

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## **Abstract**

The purpose of this case study was to gain an in-depth understanding of the experiences of 3 second-career males prior to and during their participation in teacher education programs. Case study research techniques were used to elicit data from 3 participants who had completed teacher education programs and were actively teaching in various capacities in Ontario. Data were collected through an email questionnaire, 2 open-ended, one-on-one interviews, and the researcher's field notes and reflections of the interview process. These data were coded, analyzed for emerging trends, collated, and presented as a series of findings.

The study revealed that these 3 second-career males transitioning into teacher education programs encountered a number of difficulties, some of which are a result of the way program providers structure their recruitment processes and present their curricula. Findings indicated that the second-career males in this study appeared to be inadequately prepared to work in a female-dominated profession. The study also found incompatibilities between associate teachers and these second-career candidates during practice teaching sessions.

The findings and implications are of interest to teacher educators, school boards, teacher federations, and prospective adult candidates that may be considering teaching as an alternative second career.

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## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Two personal events influenced the choice of topic for this research. The first event occurred approximately 7 years ago while I was working in the educational system as an occasional teacher. Having accepted a contract to teach in the primary division, I presented myself to the secretary of the school as the replacement and asked for direction to my classroom. I was asked to wait a few moments, as the secretary perceived that the school's principal might have specific instructions for me. When the principal arrived, she asked me to step into her office and closed the door.

"You understand that you will be teaching a kindergarten class?" she asked.

I nodded that I understood.

"These are very little children," she continued, "and they can be a handful. They are easily frightened and very nervous around strange adults."

I reassured her and told her that I thought everything would be fine and that I would try to allay any fears they might have.

"But you're a man," she blurted out.

I was at a loss as to how to handle or reply to this outburst. Later that evening, in my teaching journal, I noted the gender role stereotyping and asked myself the questions she seemed afraid to voice directly: "As a teacher, can a man not be as nurturing as a woman? Is this a biological or cultural bias?" (J. Gadoua, Journal, November 22, 2002). This was my first encounter with discrimination. I wondered how this could exist and occur in a profession that is envisioned academically and politically as a defender and promoter of inclusive rights. The episode forced me to consider more carefully the

frequency of accepting teaching contracts, daily or occasional, at the primary-grade levels.

The second set of events providing impetus for this research evolved out of the nature of occasional teaching. Most school boards across Ontario use a general call-out procedure or an automated system to fill daily vacancies in their regular staffing assignments. Through this system, occasional teachers are assigned to work wherever these vacancies occur. Occasional teachers may be given a temporary position for a day, a week, a month, or in some cases a longer period of time. Reasons for such replacements can be pregnancy, illness, stress leaves, and training courses, amongst a litany of other circumstances. In any one of these random assignments, the scenario could play itself out as it did for me in the following vignette.

As a male occasional teacher, I was assigned a temporary position at a specific school for the day. I met the principal and was taken on a tour of the building. I viewed the classroom, located the photocopiers, filled in the forms that are required, and headed to the staff room to meet my coworkers. The principal introduced me and announced to the group the roles that I would fulfill. He then began the process of introducing me to the staff on an individual basis. During the course of these introductions, someone made the comment that "it's so nice to have another male teacher on staff." I was new and temporary, so I accepted the comment with good grace and assumed it came altruistically.

As a second-career male you may move throughout the system, from assignment to assignment, and often hear this same sort of comment alluding to the lack of male teachers. You may hear it from teachers, principals, and clerical staff, and you may even

hear it from representatives of the school board for which you work. You may hear it repeated often enough for it to become ingratiating. At face value, it appears that the time, money, and efforts spent to attain your teaching certification boil down to male gender. The school has not acquired another teacher, but a male teacher. You believe that this issue, whether a teacher is male or female, should have no bearing on the ability to do the job.

Gendered tokenisms, such as this, are common in education. Bradley (2000) commented on his introduction into teaching to his students in teacher education. He described his own hiring as “the university’s attempt to redress a perceived institutional inequality” (pp. 158-159). McNay (2001), in her qualitative life history study of a second-career male teacher, echoes this sentiment when she narrates the experience of her participant, who stated “that he was sometimes seen stereotypically as a man rather than a teacher, especially when discipline was involved” (p. 141).

The two personal experiences that I have cited in which I have been viewed collegially as another male instead of a teacher evoked the following questions: Why are there fewer male teachers than female teachers working in the elementary educational system? Is stereotyping such as I encountered within the teaching profession systemic? If so, from where does it come? Is this reflected within the culture of teaching? Does this influence how men considering a career change view teaching as a profession?

A literature review of recent periodicals highlights some of the gender issues that are inherent in education today. For example, much has been written in the Ontario media about the need to have men in classrooms as role models and mentors for boys (Ferguson, 2005; Jamieson, 2005; Leslie, 2004; Mitchell, 2004). Furthermore, the needs of male



students to have role models that break down stereotypical attitudes concerning masculine and feminine work, along with issues of gender imbalance, and mentoring for male students, have also been documented (Bernard, Hill, Falter, & Wilson, 2004; Jamieson; Mitchell).

These recent articles bring to question: Why are males so underrepresented in teacher education programs? Are there identifiable correlations between the lack of male teacher candidates and teacher education methodology? What are the social and bureaucratic considerations that inhibit male candidatures? What are the significant factors that are responsible for enticing males into teacher education programs? Once certification is attained, why do so many males choose to leave the profession?

### **Background of the Problem**

Career changing, once viewed by society as undesirable and a sign of immaturity, has now become socially acceptable (Serow & Forrest, 1994). Pyper and Belanger (2004) state there is “a large and growing population of adult learners who are looking for a first degree, an additional degree, or programs relevant to their current profession or to prepare for a new profession” (p. 21). Among the cadre of adult males who seek a second career, teaching holds a strong appeal. Many of these second-career males, after working years in other environments, view teaching as a dynamic profession and a welcomed change or escape from office routines. Crow, Levine, and Nager (1990) have commented that the incidence of career change among males has increased since the 1960s and 1970s. This reflects a tendency by second-career males to exchange their existing lifestyle for another that they perceive to be of higher quality and value. Others who change careers long to teach as a way of satisfying their need to serve the

community in a personally fulfilling and meaningful manner (Coulter & McNay, 1993; Taylor, 2006; Zagor, 2006).

However, the pursuit of a career change does not come without a price. For some second-career teacher candidates, stress may be incurred as a result of relinquishing a full-time income while completing a teacher education program. Such a sacrifice represents a significant psychological, financial, and social investment by second-career male teacher candidates and their families (Chambers & Roper, 2000).

In 2004, at the age of 58, I applied and was accepted into a teacher education program. Prior to this, I had taught for a number of years on governmental letters of permission as an unqualified occasional teacher; for me, these years were the affirmation and transition into the teaching profession. My previous career in the automotive aftermarket was mundane and unsatisfying, though the remuneration was excellent. This field no longer held appeal as a career choice. This type of resignation, centering on first-career dissatisfaction, is what is realized by many males who make a career change (Crow et al., 1990; Freidus, 1992; Taylor, 2006).

Although much thought and some reservation preceded my career change, the decision was not as difficult for me as it had been for a few other second-career males in my teacher education cohort. My financial situation was stable and would be manageable throughout the 10-month period of full-time studies. I left the automotive industry financially able to exist comfortably for a number of years while working as an uncertified teacher. I easily obtained a leave of absence from the school board, as it was self-serving for them. The school board for which I worked had a consistent and growing need for new teachers, and they were more than willing to grant a leave of absence for a

future qualified prospect. Such a candidate could be assimilated quickly into their system because of prior experience. I looked forward to learning and experiencing something new, and the timing to return to school seemed perfect.

Still, I held some concerns. I had anticipated having few relationships with my fellow students, as I assumed that they would be much younger and not interested in the experiences of a second-career male teacher candidate. I wondered how I would fare academically beside bright and younger minds. Would I be able to keep up with the coursework load? I was concerned about whether I would be able to maintain my health throughout the program, especially because of the long commute between home and the university campus. Indeed, my teacher education cohort was predominantly female, and males, both first and second career, were the minority. In this sense, the teacher education program reflected the profession's ratio of 1.8 males to 8.2 females (Service Canada, 2004).

Teaching is a demanding occupation, and these demands begin in teacher education. Teacher-candidates are required to take pedagogical courses, do practice teaching, complete examinations, and meet specific criteria for certification (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Serow & Forrest, 1994). Teacher certification in Canada is a provincial/territorial responsibility and is mandated in the *Education Act* (Government of Ontario, 1990). The regulations made under this *Act* are the legal basis for service delivery to pupils of publicly funded schools (Brown, 2004). In the province of Ontario, the following requirements are necessary for teaching certification. Prior to program acceptance, candidates must have completed a minimum 3-year postsecondary degree from a postsecondary institution. After successfully completing a 10-month teacher

education program, candidates apply to the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) for certification, with proof of identity and a Canadian Criminal Record Check Report (OCT, 1966).

### **Statement of the Problem Context**

This case study explored second-career males' perceptions of their experiences in teacher education programs. The participants interviewed in this study had all negotiated their way through teacher education programs and had completed that process successfully. The study examined their perceptions of how their career change experiences were impacted by: (a) the manner in which they were socially viewed by friends, first-career teacher candidates, and previous coworkers; (b) teaching methodologies and curriculum; and (c) personal experiences in education.

Teacher education is an introduction to the teaching profession where teacher candidates gain initial competencies (Brock University, 2006; Ontario Institute for Studies in Education [OISE], 2006; Queens University, 2006; University of Western Ontario, 2006; York University, 2006). Universities structure and deliver their programs with first-career teacher candidates in mind, as this group is the majority and there are a number of fiscal realities that make these first-career teacher candidates attractive. Universities are bureaucratic structures that operate as business entities (Stevenson, 2004). In the lucrative marketplace of postsecondary education, promotion for market share is intense. In terms of numbers, first-career teacher candidates are a larger part of the market share than second-career teacher candidates. As well, the economic determinism of first-career teacher candidates, for the university, is greater in measure than that of second-career teacher candidates. The university, as an institution, has a

greater economic interest in a student body that is in a 5-year concurrent teacher education program as opposed to a 1-year program, and for this reason more undergraduate programs wish to become aligned with Bachelor of Education programs. Most second-career candidates usually attend the university for just one year of professional teacher training. Therefore, from an economic standpoint, focusing teacher education programs on the needs of first-career teacher candidates appears to be justified commercially. In 2000, departments of education from universities across Canada graduated 27,015 teachers, the majority of whom were first-career candidates (Statistics Canada). Programs need to reflect the majority in order to validate their continuance. These numbers are more easily attained from pools of first-career candidates in 5-year programs than from second-career candidates in 1-year programs.

There are two types of candidates that apply for teacher training and certification. The first are candidates that move directly from undergraduate university programs into teacher education programs. Generally, these candidates are relatively young, have somewhat established career goals, have little previous professional experience, and are considering teaching as a first-career option or as a springboard to a career in educational administration or other compatible business applications. First-career applicants regard teacher education training as formative (Kagan, 1992). In this mainstream group, for professional education to begin, beliefs about teaching need to be constructed during their professional program. Teacher educators must take into account that these teacher candidates “lack experientially grounded categories for apprehending and interpreting classroom events” (Doyle & Carter, 2003, p. 131). The other type of teacher candidate is termed “second-career,” as they have successfully negotiated their way through a first

career and has decided to make a career change to teaching (Bennett, 1988; Freidus, 1992; Shannon & Bergdoll, 1998). Professional competencies for each of these two types of candidates are different, yet teacher education intake programs tend not to discern between these competencies (Jenne, 1996).

In general, career changers have special qualities that seem to set them apart from the typical beginning teacher (Neapolitan, 1996; Novak & Knowles, 1992). They have highly developed senses of shared values that allow them to integrate into teacher education programs more quickly than first-career applicants (Crow et al., 1990; Freidus, 1992; Taylor, 2006). Prior career experiences greatly influence their organizational and classroom management skills (Serow & Forest, 1994). Many of them are parents, or have been parents, and have experience working with children. In addition to this, their prior work experiences have the potential to make academic subject matter more concrete and alive, and they bring greater insights and experience to teaching than first-career teacher candidates (Harris, 2004). Career changers also tend to look at teaching as a profession rather than as a job (Novak & Knowles). Neapolitan suggests that second-career teacher candidates are more capable than first-career teacher candidates of identifying with the role of teacher, have a more investigatory focus on their work in the classroom, and are better able to resolve conflicting issues in their personal lives. As well, they have more reflective understandings (Freidus) and different perceptions about entering teaching than first-career teacher candidates (Taylor). Once committed, career changers position themselves by ensuring that they have the required qualifications to enter and complete programs successfully (Hendricken, 2002). They arrange their financing accordingly and commit to the length of time such programs need for completion (Taylor). They have less

uncertainty than first-career candidates about succeeding and about their decisions to become teachers (Taylor).

There are several common characteristics among second-career teacher candidates. First, many have had a long-standing desire to teach and are self-determined to do so (Crow et al., 1990). They typically have strong academic backgrounds and consistent prior work histories, and most have undertaken their career change at great financial expense to themselves or their families (Serow & Forrest, 1994). As such, they bring a wealth of knowledge concerning the working world from outside the institution of education (Harris, 2004). Second-career candidates recognize that becoming a teacher is not an event, but a process that begins long before a teacher candidate ever sets foot into an education program (Brookfield, 1990; Knowles, 1974). Second-career candidates bring to education strong adaptation mechanisms (Crow et al.; Taylor, 2006) that provide dexterity and flexibility in classroom environments. They bring from previous occupations the willingness to take risks and assume challenges (Bennett, 1988; McNay, 2001) which is necessary in a learning environment. Second-career teacher candidates come to teacher education programs with a strong sense of commitment to the work (Taylor; Thompson, 1985) as well as a strong dedication to the educative process (Freidus, 1992; Taylor). Drawing on their experiences from prior work, second-career teacher candidates are able to establish a strong sense of continuity between past and present (Crow et al.; McNay). These characteristics are strong indicators of the commitment second-career candidates bring to the teaching profession.

Given the fact that second-career teacher candidates' professional competences have already been formed and established as part of their on-the-job training (Crow et al,

1990; Freidus, 1994; Kouri, 2000), teacher education programs can bridge these skills to the teaching profession. Novak and Knowles (1992) state that “there are often long periods of time, for second-career teacher candidates; between the experiences they had as secondary school students and their current work experiences” (p. 11). In some cases this could present a number of difficulties for their transition into teaching. For example, there may be gaps in second-career applicants’ knowledge of new teaching methodologies, student characteristics, and classroom management techniques (Novak & Knowles; Taylor, 2006). As well, second-career teacher candidates often hold rigid ideas and points of view concerning education that need to be tempered in such programs. Teacher education programs should strive to enhance second-career candidates’ experiential knowledge and skills. Second-career teacher candidates note that their professional preparation during teacher education should be a polishing of prior knowledge and skills that they hold from previous occupations (Zagor, 2006).

McNay (2001) notes that faculties of education in general have paid little attention to the education of second-career teacher candidates and in particular to male second-career teacher candidates. “By and large, teacher educators have not considered the particular case of second-career teachers in the design and planning of programs and courses, or the particular case of men entering a field largely populated by women” (McNay, p. 132). Furthermore, adds McNay, second-career teachers have richer life experiences than other teacher candidates, and they seem to possess a fully developed self-concept and clear goals for themselves as teachers. Teacher education programs could construct curriculum content and context around these specific strengths. Two decades ago, it was recommended (Bennett, 1988) that teacher education programs could



be designed for individuals who have a strong academic and/or experiential background in their subject area such that they can incorporate this knowledge into teaching decisions. Such academic flexibility would allow for an efficient transition into teaching practice, where pragmatic problem-centred solutions are daily occurrences.

### **Purpose of the Study**

This case study documents the experiences of 3 second-career males when they were teacher candidates. It was essential to capture an understanding of what drew them to teaching, their recollections of their experiences during the teacher education program, as well as what continues to influence their contribution to the teaching profession (Drudy, Martin, Woods, & O'Flynn, 2005; Edmonds, Sharp, & Benefield, 2002). In order to shed light on recent issues of male teacher recruitment (Drudy et al.; Sargent, 2001), this case study has revealed the perspectives of 3 second-career males with respect to the factors that they found restraining within their recruitment and teacher education programs.

A case study approach was used to gather data from 3 former second-career teacher candidates (Merriam, 1998). These data were analyzed through cross-case comparison and clustering (Merriam, 1998), and the findings are presented thematically (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). In order to seek patterns in the data, a comparative method was used "which compares one segment of data with another to determine similarities and differences" (Merriam, p. 18). The findings present the perspectives of 3 second-career male teachers concerning their career change experiences in teacher education programs and their transition into the educational community. Results from this study may be informative for institutions that provide teacher education programs, school

boards working with second-career teachers who may be anticipating a career change into teaching.

### **Research Questions**

Accordingly, this study was guided by questions arising from my experiences as a second-career male in a teacher education program as well as questions inherent in the literature:

1. What are the motivational factors that draw second-career candidates to teaching?
2. What are the experiences of second-career applicants in teacher education programs in Ontario?
  - Are the instructional methods within teacher education programs appropriate for second-career candidates?
  - How do second-career teacher candidates view their interactions with their program instructors and fellow teacher candidates?
3. How do second-career teachers view their transition to teaching?

### **Rationale**

The reason for conducting this study was to inquire into the nature and commonality of second-career teacher candidates and their experiences in teacher education. There is little research on this phenomenon especially from a Canadian context. The province of Ontario in recent years has experienced increases in immigration from all parts of the world. Having a more diverse teaching population that represents society at large helps create a more inclusive society, a society that is more tolerant, accepting, understanding, and caring. Transitional adult males entering teacher

education programs are a part of that larger society and accordingly model diversity and inclusion.

In general, the issue of decreasing male representation in schools has been documented in several countries around the world such as Canada (OCT, 2004), the United States (Serow & Forrest, 1994), the United Kingdom (Chambers & Roper, 2000; Taylor, 2006), and Australia (Mills, Martino, & Lingard, 2004). Many males leave the teaching profession after having taught only for a year or two (Canadian Education Statistics Council, 2002; Novak & Knowles, 1992; Paton, 2004). In Ontario, there has been recent discussion about the decline of male teachers in the classroom among academics, the media, and by organizational bodies that represent teachers (Leslie, 2004; Mitchell, 2004; OCT, 2004). Further, male teachers in the primary panel are rare, and in the junior and intermediate panel, although more abundant, are still in the minority (Berliner, 2004; Fergusen, 2005; Fratt, 2004; Jamieson, 2005; Jones, 2003). My personal experiences in Ontario elementary and secondary schools as an occasional teacher confirm the validity of these observations.

The lack of male presence in teaching is intriguing to me. Consequently, I decided to complete this inquiry to gain further understanding and insight into the issue. I was interested in investigating the factors that second-career males struggle with in deciding to become teachers and how they go about negotiating the transitional process. Were there discriminating factors and practices in teacher education programs that excluded them? This current work might be helpful to those males pondering teaching as a second-career opportunity. It may assist them to gain insight into the complexities of teaching in

a world where they may at times experience a lack of power and agency as well as what Gosse, Parr, and Allison (2008) term “symbolic acts of violence.”

I was and continue to be hopeful that this study may suggest directions to teacher education providers that could help recruit a greater number of second-career candidates to the profession.

### **Theoretical Framework**

I am a former second-career male teacher candidate as well as a graduate of an adult education program. Teacher education, its instructive process, curriculum, and pedagogy, as well as andragogical adult educational processes have influenced me. Therefore, in order to position this study in an educational context, it is important to discuss the framework of my own philosophy of education.

I arrived at teaching circuitously. I was initially trained in an adult education program, and as such I was heavily influenced by the writings of Malcolm Knowles (1970, 1974, 1975, 1980) and Stephen Brookfield (1990, 1995). I have worked and been involved with adults in literacy and numeracy recovery programs and as a facilitator in intervention programs. Generally, these programs are strongly imbued with pragmatic, generic, and immediate applicatory concerns for the teachers as well as the students. Students and teachers in such programs seek and provide knowledge that can lead to career upgrades, higher fiscal enhancements, or extended opportunities and status while they continue to work.

I am also a graduate of an Ontario teacher education program. During my initial teacher training, I was influenced by a number of educational philosophers, most salient of which were the writings of John Dewey (1939). Dewey’s philosophy is consistently

pragmatic and lucid with respect to the nature of education and experience and the fundamentals of pedagogy and the educational process. Pedagogy is usually considered as the art of teaching children. This has been defined by some as a didactic, traditional, and teacher-directed approach (Hiemstra & Sisco, 1990). Now, as a graduate student, I am continuously discovering and exploring the parameters of congruence and divergence between pedagogy and andragogy. Andragogy, in this context, can be defined as the methods and techniques used in the teaching and education of adults. Conner (2005) suggests a broader definition as an alternative to pedagogy and states that it refers to learner-focussed education for people of all ages. It was within these parameters that this case study was developed as an inquiry.

Second-career candidates bring to teacher education both lived and work experiences that are largely unrecognized and undervalued (Bennett, 1988; Crow et al., 1990; Freidus, 1992; McNay, 2001). The experiences of the participants in this study were examined within the context of John Dewey's philosophy of education. Dewey (1938) believed that education is experience, and as such teacher education programs are a form of apprenticeship. Using the analogy of carpentry, he noted that apprentices arrive to their trades with various levels of competence based on prior experience (Dewey, 1939). In an extended context, first career candidates arrive to teaching with little practical knowledge and experience: few carpentry tools. Their concerns are basically to survive the first years of practice and refine the basics of their trade (Kagan, 1992). Second-career candidates arrive in teacher education programs as journeymen carpenters with work experience and lived knowledge. A major precept of pedagogy and andragogy

is to begin the education process at the experiential and cognitive level of the student.

Dewey (1939) stated:

It is a cardinal precept of the newer school of education that the beginning of instruction shall be made with the experience learners already have; that this experience and the capacities that have been developed during its course provide the starting point for all further learning. (p. 674)

Stephen Brookfield (1990) extended these ideas with the following assertion for those who wish to become skilful teachers: “Before beginning any educational effort, try and do as much research as you can on your students’ backgrounds—their cultural values and allegiances; their experiences; their expectations; their language; and their most pressing concerns, problems, and dilemmas” (pp. 155, 199).

These assertions are consistent with Malcolm Knowles’s (1970) founding concepts of andragogy: The art and science of adult education is based on experience. He considered that as an adult matures he/she accumulates a growing body of experience from which learning can expand. Learning, in an andragogical context, should begin from the adult’s experiential base. Knowles articulated four assumptions differentiating andragogy from pedagogy: (a) a move from dependency to self-directedness by the learner; (b) a greater ability by the learner to draw upon their rich prior experiences; (c) a higher willingness and readiness to learn when they assume new roles; and (d) the learner’s desire to solve problems and apply new knowledge quickly.

Each of these philosophical approaches suggests that the educational process should begin from where the student is positioned. The writings of Dewey (1939) and Brookfield (1990) draw our attention to the way teachers should act and react in their

classrooms. Teachers' instructional attitudes and practices are directly related to their own experiences and philosophical beliefs. The writings of Brookfield and Knowles are similar to Dewey's concept of "learn by doing" and the connection of experience to education. For these reasons, the recognition, validation, and understanding of the experience brought to teaching by second-career male teacher candidates is important. However, teacher education programs are primarily oriented to first-career candidates and are formative in nature. As such they are more centered or directive. They do not appear to practice andragogical approaches that could be more inviting to second-career teacher candidates. Such approaches would recognize prior work experience, allow for program and curriculum flexibility, and attach academic credit for equivalent learning and competencies, thereby respecting where the second-career candidate is positioned.

Teacher education can begin by honouring the many levels of lived experience that second-career candidates bring to education that lie beyond fundamental teacher training. Many teacher candidates arrive with strong subject knowledge, classroom management, and organizational skills based on their prior exposure in other settings (Serow and Forrest, 1994). It is feasible, as Shannon and Bergdoll (1998) suggest that alternative models of teacher education and curriculum could be designed effectively to accommodate teacher candidates' prior experience. In essence it is the fundamental difference between training and retraining. In retraining one does not have to reinvent the wheel. In retraining it is assumed that certain fundamentals of knowledge are present upon which new knowledge and skills can be annexed. Teacher education for second-career candidates should focus on facilitating application and growth based on the experience that they already possess (Bennett, 1988; Shannon & Bergdoll).

In many ways this research was an inquiry into my own transition to teaching. This framework has provided the direction for my research, and these philosophical and theoretical constructions reflect my own approach to teaching and learning and the factors that influenced my career change. All good teachers have a curiosity that questions and informs their practice (Brookfield, 1990). As a teacher, I am not interested and curious just about my own work but passionately believe that I have an obligation to arouse that same curiosity in others. I attempt to do this with a pragmatism based on a lifetime of lived experience. Dewey's metaphor of carpentry helps inform not only how my practice is constructed but also how this research may potentially improve our understanding of second-career teacher candidates' experiences.

### **Importance of the Study**

There is a need in the province of Ontario for male teachers, as the education system does not reflect the gendered ratio that exists in the culture (Ferguson, 2005; Jamieson, 2005; Steel, 1998). The provincial government considers it important to attract males to the teaching profession and has commissioned studies seeking ways to promote the profession to males (Jamieson; OCT, 2004). The province has openly acknowledged that there is a lack of male role models within the public school system (Leslie, 2004). To this end the profession is seeking ways and means to help rebalance the existing gender discrepancy. This study may inform potential second-career males who are considering teaching as a profession. Teaching federations in Ontario have recognized that males are not adequately represented within the profession (Coulter & McNay, 1993; Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario [ETFO], 2006; Ontario Teachers' Federation [OTF], 2000). This has been exacerbated by the inability to retain males in the profession



(Canadian Education Statistics Council, 2002), even though promotional recruitment campaigns have been aimed at redressing the widely held social view that teaching is not a suitable profession for males (Sargent, 2001). In a society that appears to place little value on age and experience, is the second-career candidate really an anomaly within the education system?

The impediments and barriers that are perceived by applicants who are considering the pursuit of teaching as a second career inhibit their candidature and create a loss of potential talent for the profession (Brember, Brown, & Ralph, 2002; Paton, 2004; Zagor, 2006). The lack of acknowledgment for lived experience, career expertise, and reflective judgement through some form of prior learning assessment (PLA) is a large concern to second-career applicants. Once accepted into teacher education programs, the use of formative teaching pedagogies instead of andragogical principles for mature learners can contribute negatively to the experience of second-career teacher candidates.

Studies concerning second-career teacher candidates are derived from two important and complementary research directions. A number of these studies have examined the phenomena of second-career candidates as a trend within a larger teacher candidate population (Crow et al., 1990; Freidus, 1992; Novak & Knowles, 1992; Serow & Forrest, 1994; Young, 1995). In these studies, both males and females are merged as second-career teacher candidates. Another group of research studies (Drudy et al., 2005; Fergusen, 2005; Fratt, 2004; Sargent, 2001) have examined second-career teacher candidates from a gendered perspective, with findings specific to the male gender. These research projects specifically examine second-career males, their experiences, reasons,

and motivations in choosing to pursue teacher education programs. Even fewer studies (Freidus, 1994; McNay, 2001) examine teacher education curriculum and its relevancy and compatibility with adult learning requirements and processes.

This study gives a voice to second-career male participants who have successfully negotiated teacher education programs in Ontario. In the Canadian context, such research is uncommon. Rarely have second-career males been asked for input as it purports to the issues they have encountered and considered important during their teacher education programs.

### **Scope and Limitations of the Study**

This study has some limitations. The participants were surveyed and interviewed and asked to recall their previous experiences in teacher education programs. In some cases, there was a considerable time lapse. The retelling of significant events in the past is subject to what Reissman has called “selective reconstruction” (as cited in Creswell, 1994, p. 147) where individuals tend to exclude experiences that undermine the current identities they may wish to claim or be in the process of constructing. Consequently, the findings could be subject to other interpretations (Creswell, 1994, p. 147).

As well, the population examined by the study was second-career male teacher education graduates, which was a small homogenous group in comparison to first-career male teacher candidate graduates. All of the participants are teachers working in the elementary panel. They, in essence, constructed and formed the boundaries of the study (Merriam, 1998). It is worthy to note that these second-career males negotiated their teacher education programs and have subsequently secured teaching positions. These participants’ cases are success stories. The lack of second-career male participants who

have failed to negotiate teacher education programs could be interpreted as a lack of balance in the information provided.

There were no second career female participants included in this case study which narrows the universality of the findings. This study primarily focussed on the career change experiences amongst males as they pursued a career in teaching.

Finally, the participants in this study had attended a number of institutions, and the range of teacher education curricula can vary from one institution to another. These variances may have impacted significantly upon the participants' experiences within such programs and may have created inconsistencies of interpretation based on individual methodology and delivery.

### **Outline of Remainder of the Document**

Chapter One began with a personal narrative to introduce the research issue. Central to the inquiry were the research questions concerning how second-career males defined and grounded themselves as teachers in their teacher education programs and professions. These questions directed the purpose of the study and provided the justification for undertaking the research.

Chapter Two is dedicated to a review of the literature. The literature review was a necessary focus for the study that was undertaken. This section broadly maps out the literature relevant to the topic. The literature review lends understanding to particular issues from a wider more encompassing perspective (Conle, 2000). It helps concretize the research questions that were asked and reviews current thinking and new findings.

Chapter Three outlines the research design and procedures that were used in this study. The approach that was chosen for this qualitative thesis was a case study. Teacher

candidates who had successfully negotiated their way through a number of institutional teacher education programs were administered an email questionnaire and then engaged in 2 one-on-one focussed, semistructured interviews. This chapter also describes how all of the forms of the data were collected, recorded, compared, and analyzed into themes.

In Chapter Four, the findings are presented. Themes that emerged from the participants' data are identified. These themes were analyzed for consistency and veracity. Finally in Chapter Five, the results are discussed as implications for future research.

## **CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

In Canada and specifically in Ontario, there has been very little written about the historical context of second-career males in education (Crow et al., 1990; McNay, 2001). One of the few historical insights can be found in the work of Prentice (1990) that sheds light on the lives of teachers in the 1880s who were attending the Ontario Normal School in order to gain provincial teaching certification. Interestingly, many of the problems faced by first- and second-career male teachers in the 1800s are similar to those faced by male teacher candidates today. Prentice indicates that even in the past, many male teacher candidates attending Ontario's Normal School in Toronto had both teaching and life experience. These males considered themselves "too old to be trifled with" (Prentice, p. 17), and found many of the rules in the Normal School degrading. In today's modern context, many second-career males have held high, socially valued, and prestigious occupations. Change is never easy, especially when it involves successful first-career men moving into a profession that is viewed as lower in social status and well suited to women (McNay; Zagor, 2006).

There is some contemporary information about the incidence and experiences of both first- and second-career males in teaching. In the popular media, school boards from across Ontario, various government departments, and the Ontario College of Teachers have all recognized the declining number of males in the teaching profession (Jamieson 2005; OCT, 2004). Bradley (2000) clarifies that the majority of males that are teaching elementary school are in the latter part of their careers. Furthermore, many school boards note a marked decline in male teacher recruitment (Chambers & Roper, 2000; Taylor, 2006). Male teacher candidates, both first and second career, are leaving teacher

education programs for a variety of reasons (Drudy et al., 2005). This trend charts a continuous decline in young men who want to be teachers (Gardner, 1998). It seems as if young men are just not interested in choosing teaching as a profession (Budge, 1998).

Among those that do pursue teacher education programs there is a rising trend that indicates that the numbers of second-career applicants to teaching are drawn from a wide range of prior occupations, yet they have a common set of characteristics (Crow et al., 1990; Novak & Knowles, 1992; Zagor, 2006). Second-career candidates can bring commitment to teaching, proven professional experience, and extensive life histories, all of which can have positive and lasting effects on their students (Taylor, 2006).

Conversely, they may also bring to their new profession antiquated teaching methodologies, conservative perceptions concerning education, and a strong propensity for perpetuating the bureaucratic status quo (Jenne, 1996). Regardless, second-career teacher candidates' previously acquired professionalism should be recognized and validated, as it can impact on their newly chosen profession (Jenne; Zemke & Zemke as cited in Kervin & McDonald, 1999).

When investigating teaching as a second career, prospective males have personal and social expectations. Often they thoroughly evaluate the viability of teaching as a career choice. There appear to be four dimensions that are considered by first- and second-career males prior to entry into the teaching profession: a social and cultural context (Bradley, 2000; Coulter & McNay, 1993), a psychological context (Crow et al., 1990; Jamieson, 2005), an emotional and personal context (Fratt, 2004; Jones, 2003; McNay, 2001), and a litigious context (Berliner, 2004; Jamieson; Leslie, 2004). The following sections will examine each of these dimensions and extend the discussion to

the reluctance of males to enter the teaching profession and the attrition of male teachers in the profession.

### **Social and Cultural Contexts**

Today, teaching in Ontario is regarded as a nontraditional occupation for second-career males. Thornton (2003) and Jones (2003) note that this is not a view that is isolated to the provincial or Canadian context. The cultural landscape of Ontario is in transition, as cities, especially Toronto, attract large influxes of immigrants from around the world. Figures provided by the Ontario Ministry of Finance census (2001) indicate that Ontario is home to 54% of the visible minorities in Canada and 36% of Toronto's population are visible minorities. Many of these cultures originate in the Middle East and Central Asia, where there are differing views and expectations concerning men in teaching roles and masculinity in general (Beynon, Ilieva, & Dichupa, 2001; Beynon & Tookey, 1995). They do not "perceive teaching as sufficiently prestigious or lucrative to consider worth pursuing" (Beynon et al., p. 10). Such cultural expectations can be influential on male teacher candidates and may promote negative perceptions of the teaching profession (Beynon et al.). In some instances, especially where gender roles are strongly entrenched, these perceptions may affect in a negative manner even veteran male teachers and may promote marginalization (Mitchell, 2004; Sargent, 2001; Steel, 1998; Thornton, 2003).

In Ontario, the base salary levels for new teachers communicate a clear statement of the inconsistent value of teaching. The salary level for beginning teachers is lamentable and hardly an incentive for individuals to leave established careers and enter teaching (Ferguson, 2005; Fratt, 2004; Leslie, 2004; Mitchell, 2004; Paton, 2004).

Ironically, children are an important resource; yet, remunerating those responsible for educating them is poor. Second-career candidates have difficulty negotiating the illogical nature of these conflicting social and institutional attitudes.

Over the last 20 years, there has been a change in the manner in which teachers, regardless of gender, are socially and publicly perceived in Ontario. Teachers in the past were highly regarded professionals; their function as caregivers and educators occupied an honoured niche within society (Drudy et al., 2005). “Teachers were paragons of moral virtue,” and looked up to by students, parents, and the community (Hill, 1996; p. 34). Consequently, in the past, teachers had an entrenched notion of service to the people of the province. Today the failure of males to view teaching as sufficiently prestigious or lucrative points glaringly and painfully to a social image of service that is much maligned.

### *Accountability*

Under the auspices of greater accountability, the Ontario government has recently designed, initiated, and implemented programs to bring quantifiable measurement to education (Hargreaves, Earl, & Schmidt, 2002). Across the last decade, this has been exemplified through large-scale testing for students and performance testing for teachers. Some view the implementation of performance accountability systems as “a move towards the masculinisation of teaching as both an activity and as an organizational structure” (Drudy et al., 2005, p. 9).

In Ontario, the administrative arm, The Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO), is responsible for the provincial testing of students’ abilities in writing, math, and reading. These tests are based on the assumption that there are common



knowledge and skill expectations for all students that can be measured through large-scale standardized tests. Through EQAO testing, education in Ontario is now purportedly measurable, quantifiable, and scientifically reproducible (Lachowsky, 2006).

The multicultural demographic of Ontario suggests that shared knowledge and skills are not necessarily the reality in the province's student population (Ontario Ministry of Finance, 2001; Statistics Canada, 2006). This was articulated in a position paper by a joint advisory committee, called *Principles of Fair Student Assessment Practices for Education in Canada* (1993), which stated that in order for assessment methods to be valid, they should be free from biases "that are linked to factors such as culture, development stage, gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic background, language, special interests, and special needs" (pp. 4-5). Provincial testing seems to adopt a one-size-fits-all approach. For this reason, standardized testing appears to evaluate schools and students as products of an urban society that are not demographically representative of the province (Hargreaves et al., 2002). With such a skewed purpose, the Elementary Teachers Federation of Ontario (ETFO, 2005) considers EQAO testing as a process that undermines the teaching profession and denigrates students in Ontario. The Federation views EQAO testing as a political tool that promotes the distorted view that large-scale testing is the only reliable measure of student achievement (Noble, 2007). Critics of the large-scale assessment programs warn that testing should not be used to evaluate one school against another (Simner, 2000).

The view of education as industry has commodified the texture of curriculum and its application. Programs and methodologies of learning are structured to produce students with certain commonalities as indicated in the EQAO testing formats

(Hargreaves et al., 2002; Lachowsky, 2006). Students have become data manipulators but poor data interpreters; they are able to read, but have difficulty critically assessing what they have read; they are able to do math, but without the aid of technology, they cannot do mathematical computations (Lachowsky). Schools appear to have become institutions of assimilation, using a one-size-fits-all approach to education and testing, with high male failure rates in literacy (Drudy et al., 2005) and writing skills (Engemann, Gallagher, & McQuirter Scott, 2006). Hargreaves et al. report that in England and Australia, where standardized testing has been in place for a number of years, there is a trend to ease the “mandated curriculum and assessment expectations” and a move towards “more flexible, learning-based, student-centered alternatives” (pp. 72-73).

The Ontario Teacher Qualification Test (OTQT) was implemented in 2000 and administered by the Ontario College of Teachers as a prerequisite to certification (OCT, 1996). Upon inception, this test was viewed by teachers and their representing unions as demoralizing and ineffective (Glassford, 2005). Experienced teachers viewed the testing as demeaning the professional status (Glassford). The Ontario College of Teachers stated that the OTQT failed to address the complexities of teaching as there was little correlation between the results of teacher testing and observed success with students in the classroom (OCT, 2000). The OTQT emphasized teacher professionalism as a measurable business function, with children being the end product of the process (Hargreaves et al., 2002; O’Sullivan, 1999). The OTQT was revoked in 2003; however it is believed that the status of teachers was lowered as a result of this qualifying test (Lachowsky, 2006). Teachers felt that even the suggestion of this type of testing implied doubt in their professional abilities and skills.

Education in Ontario is viewed as custodial in nature, with the province positioning itself as the guardian, safekeeper, and protector of all educational processes (Bradly, 2000; Hill, 1996; Leslie, 2004; Milloy, 2003). Within this custodial perspective, there is a defined role for female teachers; male teachers have a place and function within the females' profession (Jamieson, 2005; Mitchell, 2004; Sargent, 2001). Stereotypically, males are viewed as disciplinarians and not as nurturing as females. Consequently, they may perceive that they have little effect teaching at the primary and junior levels (Bradley; Fergusen, 2005; Jamieson; Sargent). Men feel that in order to teach they must define their masculinity in the social context of the primarily female teaching occupation which often views them as transient, authoritative, and highly disciplinary (Sargent).

In this era of accountability, there is little opportunity for innovation and even less for individuality in education. Many teachers feel that classrooms are places where they have no voice or effective presence. With the added dimension of being in a minority position within most schools, men are particularly sensitive to this loss of voice and presence (Bradley, 2000; Mitchell, 2004; Steel, 1998). Some male teachers see themselves becoming systematized and institutionalized in a culture that is far more bureaucratic than educative (O'Sullivan, 1999).

### *The Workplace*

In the social context of the workplace, the unspoken bias towards men wanting to teach may still exist. This is especially pronounced in the business world, where leaving business for teaching is still considered by some as an implausible choice (Crow et al., 1990). There are still rigid social perceptions concerning men in the classroom that result in males seeing the teaching profession as a feminine career (Hill, 1996; Milloy, 2003).

In some cases, men, dismayed by the current perceptions of teaching, deliberately avoid entering the profession in order to concentrate on other commitments such as raising families and establishing themselves in other less conflicted or volatile careers (Berliner, 2004).

Further, the public perception of teachers holds an attitude towards education and teaching that is unsupportive and antagonistic (Hill, 1996). Within this attitude, male teachers may feel marginalized in the workplace and isolated socially by a public and bureaucracy that are unsupportive and even suspicious of any altruistic motives they may demonstrate (Hill). Hendricken (2002) claims that for an older male to be seen to publicly open his heart is to be viewed with suspicion by the society at large. For males, socialized to compete for employment in prestigious and lucrative professions, this erosion of public and administrative support further serves to enhance career isolation and lower their sense of accomplishment. “The despair of the educator,” states O’Sullivan (1999) “comes when there is an irrevocable realization that the system he or she is in, is not a workable or laudable one in terms of where it is going and what it is accomplishing” (p. 37).

Adding to a less favourable impression of the teaching profession is the view that education takes place in a microwork environment, not the larger, real-world context. In particular, second-career teacher candidates regard their prior first-career experiences as their work in “the real world” before beginning their teacher education programs (Bradley, 2000). Consequently, decisions of second-career males to enter teaching as an alternative career choice may be affected by their perceptions of the value and feminization of teaching. Further investigation is warranted to uncover how males are

affected by the behaviour and expectations of socially constructed roles in teaching (Ashley, 2003).

### *The Need to Serve*

One of the primary reasons that men are attracted to teaching is in response to their desire to work with children and adolescents (Serow & Forrest, 1994; Taylor, 2006). This instinct is alive in males and a part of their psychological make-up (Hendricken, 2002; Rush, 2005; Sargent, 2001). A male's desire to teach can be as strong, caring, and nurturing as any experienced by a female, and of the same importance in the education of students (Rush; Sargent). Interestingly, there is a lack of research that examines the nurturing instincts of males, their demonstrations of care, and the influence that these instincts may have on their desire to teach (Rush). For males, it is socially more acceptable to subvert this instinct rather than to acknowledge its existence, as it appears that this type of service has very little social currency (Drudy et al., 2005; Hendricken; Sargent). In particular, older males tend to hide or disguise their feelings (Hendricken). Indeed we appear to live in a society that does not seem to place much value on males' ability to nurture or display their emotions; consequently, researchers may overlook these factors (Sargent).

Once first- or second-career males arrive in the profession of teaching, there is a marked lack of other males in the school staff room (Hill, 1996; Sargent, 2001; Steel, 1998). Further, the few males that are in the staff room tend to be outsiders (Chusmir, 1990; Hill; Sargent). Hendricken (2002), in his study of second-career professional males in graduate programs, presents the following gender differentiation:

Women form groups. They cluster and support each other. Older men, despite the best efforts of theorists to place them in a niche, have lived independent lives, sometimes erratic lives supported by job identification, and scheduled gatherings for sporting events. (p. 17)

The lack of camaraderie and support may limit a male's ability to discuss common problems with others in a gendered context (Chusmir; Sargent). This confirms to men that they teach in a female-dominated work environment (Drudy et al., 2005; Rees, 1990).

At times, males perceive that females in the teaching profession resent them and make them feel unwelcome (McNay, 2001; Sargent, 2001). Within teaching, a double standard appears to exist: There is an identified lack of males; however males are not always made to feel welcome (Hill, 1996; Jones, 2003; Steel, 1998). Administrators at all levels agree that more males need to enter the teaching profession; however, once males enter the profession, they receive discordant messages from their teaching colleagues and in some cases experience direct resentment (Sargent).

Hollis (2001) points out that "few of us arrive at the second half of life with clarity, conviction, satisfaction, because life too often leads one along a tortuous path, away from the road envisioned" (p. 67). For second-career male teacher candidates, the vision of being a teacher is influenced by the social and cultural contexts that they have experienced along the path of life. The following are psychological factors that are also considered by males seeking teaching as a career.

### **Psychological and Educational Contexts**

An individual who makes a career change may be motivated to do so by a number of psychological factors: midlife concerns, personal identity issues, relationships, or general career dissatisfaction (Crow et al., 1990). O'Connor (1995) notes that men are apt to experience considerable social pressures during their working lives and that in midlife they may seriously start to question earlier career choices. Murphy and Burck (1976), reporting on the results of seven studies on older men, indicated that there was a drop in the self-esteem of men around the age of 40 which often was accompanied by the questioning of values and priorities as well as occupational and personal identities. Patricia Cross (1981) states "career changes appear to be common transitional activities that motivate adults towards new learning opportunities" (p. 20). In turn, learning, in many cases, is a coping response to a significant life change (Zemke & Zemke as cited in Kervin & McDonald, 1999). For some second-career males, walking into the classroom provides them with a new lease on life, a fresh start in another career, and a new chance to pursue a more meaningful vocation (Hendricken, 2002). However, their learning does not always appear to be supported in the most appropriate and effective ways.

As individuals progress through various life stages, socialized perceptions about the role of education become apparent (Cross, 1981; Reeves, 1999). Compared to first-career adult students, second-career adult students make clearer choices, are more likely to be challenged by their classes and spend more time studying, and are usually more confident in their ability to keep up with academic demands (Cross; Taylor, 2006). Interestingly, those males who make career changes to teaching tend to be an older demographic than for other professions (Gardner, 1998; Taylor).

Some of the reluctance that males express in considering teaching as a career may be directly related to how universities recruit teacher candidates. It is common in program applications for universities to require applicants to outline their experience and relate its relevance to their potential profession. In the case of second-career male applicants, this experience is professional, detailed, and extensive. Yet most universities in Ontario do not appear to provide any advance standing or credit for this experience. Another consideration is the fact that second-career males also come to teaching and higher education with life experience (Hendricken, 2002; McNay, 2001). If accepted into teacher education programs, second-career candidates are pooled amongst first-career candidates with limited life experience and needs that are determinative in nature and formative in career structure.

Young (1995) examined data from 265 teacher candidates seeking certification in California. She studied their qualifications, career plans, and work perceptions. She found through data garnered by surveys that 82% of the registered teacher candidates were in their 20s, 14% were in their 30s, and only 4% were in their 40s or above. These latter students were highly qualified, holding first degrees, and had successfully undertaken a battery of qualifying entrance examinations in competition for limited program openings. This study did not note the gender breakdown of the cohort.

Once accepted into teacher education programs, second-career candidates tend not to be andragogically supported; that is, they are not encouraged to be self-directing or autonomous as learners. Hendricken (2002) explains that there are times when professors' assumptions in higher education programs fail to address student needs. I experienced this during my own journey through a teacher education program.



In our educational methods classes, I felt there was disparity between the information and strategies I was given and my own experiences as an occasional teacher in the classroom. It became obvious to me that the children my professor referred to were not the same kind of children that I had recently encountered in my years of precertification practice. My lived classroom experiences were more current and valid than the professor's experiences. Summoning up courage, and explaining that I was not attempting to be demeaning in any way, I inquired as to when she had last taught in a classroom? It turned out that she had last taught in the 1980s and that her experiences for the last 15 years had been primarily administrative. I let the discussion die in the classroom as not to embarrass her further. Privately, I was taken aback by the knowledge that some teacher education courses were taught by administrators and not practitioners. Based on this realization, I believe that it should not be unreasonable to expect teacher education professors and course facilitators to rotate from teaching duties to field work every couple of years for their own personal growth and learning (Journal, J. Gadoua, November 2004).

Though second-career teacher candidates may have experiences that are rich and varied, they are not always considered relevant or important by their teacher education instructors. This could be especially true where professors and students are of the same age or where the students are significantly older than their teachers (Hendricken, 2002).

It is not often the case that a postsecondary institution recognizes a second-career candidates need to learn based on his life experiences and social roles (Knowles, 1980; Zemke & Zemke as cited in Kervin & McDonald, 1999). Second-career candidates have an orientation to learning that is inclined to use immediate application in present

circumstances, not postponed application for future circumstances (Knowles; Zemke & Zemke as cited in Kervin & McDonald). Little attention is paid to the andragogical understanding that second-career students may require problem-based teaching methods as opposed to subject-centered teaching methods. Second-career applicants, as teacher candidates, need to find solutions to problems that they have already identified, as opposed to being provided with answers to problems that the professor may pose (Knowles). Further, adult learning requires a creative environment that will maximize learning opportunities (Knowles; Zemke & Zemke as cited in Kervin & McDonald).

In general, teacher education programs are viewed as a formative professional requirement to direct entry and certification for first-career teacher candidates (Brock University, 2006; OISE, 2006; University of Western Ontario, 2006; York University, 2006). Dean Rosa Bruno-Jofre of Queen's University, in her message to undergraduate education students, stated that teacher candidates were taking the first step in a lifelong journey, a formative journey, that teacher candidates and the department of education were taking together (Queen's University, 2006).

Teacher candidates usually work under constant faculty supervision (Brock University, 2006; OISE, 2006; Queens University, 2006; University of Western Ontario, 2006; York University, 2006). Second-career male teacher candidates do not always appreciate this scrutiny, as it may send the message that they are formative learners (Crow et al., 1990). Their acquired life skills have been proven through experience (Zemke & Zemke as cited in Kervin & McDonald, 1999), and anything that minimizes this capacity tends to make them indignant. In teacher education courses, there is often an orientation that is directed towards future teaching circumstances. This is particularly true

for subject-centered methods courses. Second-career teacher candidates are not responsive or accepting of the discipline demanded by teacher education programs that are generically structured and custodial (Brember et al., 2002; Prentice, 1990).

Further, second-career teacher candidates find it frustrating to deal with boundaries that are engrained in the bureaucracy of educational institutions (Hendricken, 2002). This includes procedural dogma which second-career teachers find pedantic when simple tasks are made more complex by dealing with administrative protocols (Hendricken).

Current print media propagates the message that it is common for teachers to become tired (Chambers & Roper, 2000) and burned out (Mitchell, 2004). These accounts negatively influence second-career male teacher candidates and promote negative perceptions of the profession within their families (Bradley, 2000; Crow et al., 1990; Hill, 1996; Jamieson, 2005; Steel, 1998). Pervasively, there are images in the media about the state of teaching, and these images impact negatively on the social and personal psychology of second-career male candidates (Fergusen, 2005; Lang, 2006; Leslie, 2004; Mitchell, 2004; Steel, 1998).

Such negative images lower the status of the profession as well as the prestige of teaching. It is difficult for second-career males to entertain teaching as a profession when their motives and abilities, are constantly being called into question (McNay, 2001). The result is that there are few male role models in the teaching profession to counteract many of these psychological barriers (Leslie, 2004; Mills et al., 2004). In Canada, the denigration of teachers and of their professional image has actually contributed to males refraining from seeking careers in education (Leslie; Service Canada, 2004).

Unfortunately, there is little empirical research to document the contribution and impact that second-career teachers make on the teaching profession. Specifically, there is a lack of research that reveals a strong correlation between the efficacy of adult second-career male teachers as role models and positive student performance (Ashley, 2003; Chusmir, 1990; Coulter, 1995). Coulter and McNay (1993), after examining assumptions and stereotypes about men in nontraditional occupations, concluded that the call for more men in elementary education “oversimplified complex issues and left unexamined the political nature of that call” (p. 398). Without a “raison d’être” that will encourage males to look beyond the negativity in which the teaching profession is immersed and portrayed, teaching will continue to be viewed by males as a demoralizing profession to pursue (Petty, 2004) and one that rarely conforms to social expectations (Kagan, 1992; Milloy, 2003). Faced with such prohibitive psychological barriers, it is to be expected that some male teachers may view themselves as alienated and isolated (Hill, 1996; Jones, 2003; McNay, 2001; Steel, 1998). They may feel that they have to continuously reaffirm their roles in the teaching profession (Hill; Jones).

In general, men tend not to engage in activities that potentially jeopardize their self-concepts (Jones, 2003; Sargent, 2001). In teacher education classroom environments, there are likely to be times when second-career males prefer to preserve their self-esteem in the presence of their colleagues. Men have difficulty defining their masculinity as a function of their image in a profession that is filtered with a feminist orientation (Bradley, 2000; Mitchell, 2004; Steel 1998). In a society where such perceptions are value laden, working in a female-dominated profession strikes directly at a male’s self-concepts (Bradley; Coulter & McNay, 1993). In some cases, second-career males feel that the high

costs of entering the teaching profession might not be worth the insecurity and social isolation (McNay, 2001).

There are discordant educative methodologies in teacher education programs that are not consistent with andragogically sound practice, nor are the methodologies invitational (Novak & Knowles, 1992). Add to this the negative bias which is articulated in the media, and first-career males tend to view teaching as an undesirable prospective profession. As well, psychologically gendered isolation and the high costs of social and financial upheaval do little to encourage second-career males to view teaching as secure and rewarding. Consequently, few first- and second-career males entertain teaching as an alternative vocation.

### **Emotional and Personal Contexts**

The following outlines a number of emotional and personal concerns that preoccupy second-career males and are viewed as impediments to successful career transition. These concerns center on financial obligations, institutional barriers, and socially gendered perceptions of teaching.

#### *Financial Considerations*

The reluctance that second-career males experience when considering teaching as a career may be attributed to a number of circumstances. Second-career males may hold medical concerns that are associated with life change processes such as increased psychological stress, depression, feelings of isolation, and inability to relax (Brember et al., 2002; Taylor, 2006). Other stressors for males center on family relationships and the need to financially provide for their families (Brember et al.). Potential financial concerns reflect the reality that teacher education programs are expensive, and many males find it

difficult to afford to enrol given the potential loss of income as well as their tuition (Chambers & Roper, 2000; Milloy, 2003).

Once teacher education programs begin, some career change candidates realize that there is inconsistency between their expectations and the realities of teaching (Chambers & Roper, 2000). In some cases, second career candidates then withdraw from teacher education programs (Chambers & Roper). Chambers and Roper studied why students withdrew from teacher education programs in England and found that it was more socially acceptable for teacher candidates to leave their program rather than to fail. Stress and workload in teacher education programs as well as low morale within the profession are cited as reasons why candidates most often withdrew (Chambers & Roper). Cranton (1992) has observed that when self-directed adult learners see a discrepancy between their expectations and their experience they often become disenchanted and withdraw from their programs.

#### *Institutional Attitudes and Barriers*

Stephen Brookfield (1990) has noted that there are four basic tenets to being an effective teacher. They must have subject knowledge. They must have a number of instructional strategies to impart the curriculum and support students' learning skills. They must know his students and their learning strengths and weaknesses. Finally, They must know themselves and their own strengths and weaknesses. Inherently, through exposure to life and work experiences, "second-career male teacher candidates already have a sound grasp of their personal strengths and weaknesses and often subject-specific content knowledge" (Thompson, 1985, p. 17). Institutions should view these preexisting tenets as assets and recognize them upon inception into the teacher education program.

Freidus (1992) suggests that second-career teachers might assume professional roles more readily than younger candidates because of their experience in other careers. Second-career candidates may come to teaching with well-defined subject expertise, and they may bring competencies that have been tested and proved in other arenas. Andragogical teaching methods suggest that second-career students should be placed in teaching and learning environments where their competencies are immediately utilized (Knowles, 1980; Thompson, 1985; Zemke & Zemke as cited in Kervin & McDonald, 1999). If not, the possibility of having them become bored and disinterested may hinder successful program completion.

Teacher education programs need to have applicable curriculum designs and appropriate teaching methodologies to assist second-career applicants to efficiently transition into the teaching profession. For sufficiently qualified candidates, curriculum adjustments allowing them to proceed in a more timely fashion to longer practica sessions could satisfy their need for more immediate application. Second-career candidates value this integrative process and the provision of a learning context that offers immediate concrete application (Knowles, 1974). Finally, many second-career teacher candidates tend to have some education experience either working within schools or from corporate training and program development settings (Bennett, 1988; Gardner, 1998; McNay, 2001, Taylor, 2006).

The learning needs and skills of second-career students should be respected. The prior knowledge and experience of second-career teacher candidates should be validated in their teacher education programs (Crow et al., 1990). These students see little value in being subjected to meaningless exams and lectures where they cannot participate or ask

questions (Brember et al., 2002). Second-career students have difficulty justifying their participation in teacher education programs where their prior knowledge and competencies are disregarded, where curriculum and instruction ignore their preferred learning styles, and where low professional image and morale exist (Crow et al.).

Some males approach teacher education programs with a lack of procedural preparedness (Milloy, 2003; Petty, 2004). For example, it has been suggested by Thornton (2003) that men are less prepared in the human resource-type skills of job application procedures and do not recognize how competitive it is to obtain a teaching position. In some jurisdictions, the demands of rigorous certification testing and recruitment procedures can also be seen as barriers by second-career male teacher candidates (Brember et al., 2002).

### *Gendered Perceptions of Teaching*

There are still some factions within society that do not see teaching as an appropriate full-time occupation for males (Bradley, 2000; Jones, 2003; Mitchell, 2004). Teaching is not always viewed as either lucrative or prestigious enough for males (Beynon et al., 2001; Beynon & Tookey, 1995). This is reinforced through the media and popular critiques highlighting the increased challenges and demands of educational accountability and new curriculum (Brember et al., 2002; Chambers & Roper, 2000; Fratt, 2004; Milloy, 2003). Media attention on teachers paints a negative public image of them (Lang, 2006; Petty, 2004). In this stereotypical image, it is difficult for the teaching profession to be viewed as valuable in light of what is offered and available in the public sector of work (Berliner, 2004; Paton, 2004; Steel, 1998). More money, less stress, and better social contracts in business, law, engineering, social sectors, health care, and



manufacturing make it difficult to entice males to the teaching profession (Paton).

Consequently, some males view teaching as a temporary, short-term, transitional, or opportunistic vocation (Bradley; Hill, 1996; Jones, 2003; McNay, 2001).

Last, there is a tendency in schools for men to be seen stereotypically as males and not as educators when they are exercising authority and disciplining (McNay, 2001). Male occasional teachers are often welcomed as another male in the school rather than being seen as a teacher. But what kind of role model do males portray as elementary-age boys are forming their gender identity? "Should men aspire to be nurturing with small children, or should men aspire to the more traditional role of enforcing strict discipline and more focussed subject-based cognitive learning?" (Ashley, 2003, p. 260). Public views as well as those held by teachers within the profession perpetuate the debate, but until clarified, males will continue to work in a profession rife with mixed messages.

### **Litigation Issues**

The following section describes areas of litigation that impact second-career candidates' decisions to enter teacher education programs and careers. These concerns center around issues of sexual deviancy, due diligence, and provincial authority.

#### *Sexual Deviancy*

Potential litigation issues are one of the most contentious considerations of male teacher candidates. Chief among these is the male fear of being branded as a sexual deviant when working with children (Berliner, 2004; Bradley, 2000; Coulter & McNay, 1993; Jones, 2003; McNay, 2001; Milloy, 2003). There is a general feeling in mainstream society that it is inappropriate for male teachers to be in contact with young children (Jamieson, 2005; Jones). Sargent (2001), in his work with male elementary school

teachers, refers to this gendered notion. He notes that child care is not presented to boys and young men as being an appropriate professional pursuit. This is a form of gender stereotyping and policing (Fratt, 2004; Sargent; Thornton, 2003). When teaching, some males perceive that their actions are being constantly scrutinized (Hill, 1996; Jones; Milloy). For a second-career male teacher candidate, this scrutiny may cause a certain amount of uneasiness that may contribute to some reluctance to become a teacher.

### *Due Diligence*

Litigation brings on additional concerns for males, especially in dealing with issues of discrimination, sexuality, and due diligence. Continuously, teachers are faced with avoiding negligence in areas such as student safety, child abuse, attendance, discipline, classroom management, student rights, governance, teaching duties and powers, labour laws, curriculum, and copyright (Henderson-Boone, Butler, & Coombs, 2006). Once judicial proceedings for a cause are initiated, such implications, even if proven false over time, may carry long-term consequences. Teachers may feel pressure to resign or administrators may feel obligated to reassign them to other teaching duties. The potential of these consequences could inhibit promotion and career mobility as well as stigmatize the accused for the remainder of his teaching career. Some teachers prefer to leave the profession, feeling that there are too many incursions on what they believe to be the legal integrity of the classroom (Juska, 1994).

### *Provincial Authority*

As the certifying agency for teachers in Ontario, The Ontario College of Teachers “investigates and considers complaints about members that relate to professional misconduct, incompetence or incapacity” (OCT, 2006c, p. 154). Members can be brought

before the College for any one of the following inappropriate actions: personal interactions with students, verbal abuse, disciplinary measures, use of school computers, professional misconduct, assignments, comments, fiscal management, behaviour, or sexual abuse (OCT, 2006b). Sanctions can be as minor as a cautionary admonishment to as severe as having a teaching license revoked. The Ontario College of Teachers publishes the sanctions and the results of its investigations and findings in their monthly journal called *Professionally Speaking*.

The knowledge and fear of having litigation issues publicized does little to allay stigmatization, inspire confidence, or secure impartiality in work-specific domains. In the enterprise of education, reputations that have been long in construction can be ruined in a relatively short time with little or no public recourse. The possibility of public humiliation as well as professional ostracism is a reality teachers, especially male teachers, always seem to have hanging over their heads. The stigmatization of a teacher's reputation, whether guilty or not, has the potential to end a career.

### **Chapter Summary**

In Ontario diverse cultures hold differing views about men in teaching roles. Many view the teaching profession as an unsuitable occupation because of the lack of associated prestige and the low recompense associated with the career. Current entry salary levels for new teachers promote these negative perceptions and reinforce messages of inconsistency concerning the social value to prospective male candidates.

The provincial EQAO initiative evaluates students and schools as products of a society, and it is not demographically representative. This has undermined the tone and morale of the teachers as professionals. Teacher candidates have come to view such

schools as vehicles of assimilation and increased bureaucracy. Similarly, former OTQT implementation lowered the status of teaching by casting doubt toward professional abilities, competencies, and skills. It appears that such initiatives are viewed as having little room for innovation and individuality in teaching. Second career teachers and prospective transition candidates have begun to look at the profession as highly systematized, institutionalized, and an uninviting environment.

The gendered perception of men as not being as nurturing as women has sent mixed messages to male teacher candidates. Where such nurturing has been demonstrated, it has usually been rife and suspect with allegations and innuendo that are sexual in nature. Males entering the profession under such circumstances are not made to feel valued or welcomed. Understandably, males are not generally interested in entering a profession with such scrutinizing parameters.

A change in career is a transitional activity for second-career males that can be initiated by a number of psychological considerations including the desire for a fresh start in a new career or wanting to pursue a more fulfilling vocation. "In order to understand the significance of a career in a person's life, both the individual and the career environment must be changed" (Freidus, 1989, p. 12). Yet, some teacher candidates encounter institutional and bureaucratic barriers in changing careers. For those who make a career change to teaching, few teacher education programs make accommodations for the professional and lived experience of second-career students. Instead, formative teaching methods as opposed to andragogical practices are employed in this demographic. As such, education programs may impede the learning for this demographic of teacher education candidates. Additionally, the media's negative

portrayal of the teaching profession may cause emotional and personal unease in this nontraditional teacher candidate group as they pursue teaching as a career.

Many second-career teacher candidates experience emotional and personal challenges that are related to medical and financial concerns and commitments to both their family and school. At the institutional level, second-career teacher candidates tend to be treated in the same manner as first-career candidates; this ignorance exacerbates their frustration in teacher education programs. There are also challenges within the gendered perceptions, which view males in the teaching profession as transitory. In addition and beyond these deterrents, second-career male teacher candidates have fears related to potential litigation issues.

The profession of teaching has been attacked politically, socially, and ethically by the popular media. Teaching does not seem to hold the same prestige as other occupations (Drudy et al., 2005). There are examples of demeaning labels about the education system which are detrimental in attracting males to the profession (Berliner, 2004; Jones, 2003; McNay, 2001; Milloy, 2003).

The issue of low male recruitment is not unique to Canada. Drudy et al. (2005) in an Irish study contend that the universality of the underrepresentation of men in teaching at the elementary level has historical, psychological, and sociological implications, a view that has been questioned by Coulter and McNay (1995) in debating the necessity of men in elementary panels. Coulter and McNay (1993) have suggested that the call for more men in education may in fact be oversimplified and suggest that it may be used by political bodies to hide other agendas. Skelton (2007) added a new dimension when she found that the attitudes of young males towards teachers and school mobilized around

issues of competitiveness and power. She coined the term, “moral panic” by government and media concerning the perceived gap between boys and girls in academics (p. 681)

In Ontario no estimates have been defined at the provincial or board levels indicating what would be acceptable quotas of gender representation in the teaching profession, though common sense might dictate a 50:50 split as a workable starting point. Though much is publicized concerning the lack of males in teaching, little is politically evident to redress the image of the profession and its gendered reality, adding strength to Coulter and McNay's (1993) argument. It appears that a problem has been identified, yet a focus and approach for remediation is undefined. This may have to do with the lack of male gendered studies in education. Few studies have been able to identify the unique contribution males make to the teaching profession and to the lives of the students they teach (Ashley, 2003).

It is difficult for teachers to reconcile their bureaucratic and academic vision of the profession with the images and constraints that surround them. The vision of the teaching profession is constantly being modified and cannot be defined adequately for males. Increasingly, males avoid entry into the profession of teaching because they see little relevance in their teacher training and little dignity in the profession (Drudy et al., 2005). Further, second-career teacher candidates with previous experience as unqualified teachers see little value teaching students that have no interest in the proposed curriculum or in wanting to learn (Hanushek, Kain, & Rivkin, 2004; McCoy, 2003).

Second-career applicants have many concerns when considering teaching as a profession. As mature individuals, they have different perceptions about entering teaching (Taylor, 2006). These concerns are social and cultural in nature and have

psychological implications for both first- and second-career male applicants. Emotional and personal issues arising from litigation further serve to alienate transitioners from considering teaching as a viable career choice. In Ontario, these concerns have historical, social, and bureaucratic contexts.

There is a distinct gap between the ideal of teaching as portrayed in teacher education programs and the actuality of teaching practice (Bennett, 1988; McNay, 2001). As well, teacher education programs are not in line with how the profession is viewed by second-career applicants (Brember et al., 2002; Hill, 1996; McNay). This has influenced the way in which male teachers view themselves within the profession. The male teacher candidate perceives that he must walk a gender-conscious tightrope inside and outside of the profession that is peppered with personal, political, and social expectations (Hill; Jones, 2003; McNay; Steel, 1998). Faced with undefined and conflicting expectations such as trying to compromise with colleagues, students, and parents, career changers will continue to consider other professional venues as less confrontational and more rewarding opportunities (Steel).

The current study examined the issues encountered by second-career male teachers as they recalled how they approached, applied to, and participated in their teacher education programs. The study examined how these participants viewed their transitions to teaching and the impediments they encountered during that transition. Through this case study examination of second-career transition experiences, it is hoped that recommendations may be evident and in turn offered to support other second-career males as they seek a career in teaching.

### **CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES**

Qualitative research is an inquiry process useful for exploring and understanding a central phenomenon (Creswell, 2002; Merriam, 1998). In this fashion, qualitative research may be construed as a way of knowing. To understand phenomena within a temporal context, qualitative research uses natural approaches to data collection such as observations, interviews, questionnaires, and document analyses. The process of conducting qualitative research involves identifying a research issue, constructing a literature search, specifying a purpose for the research, and collecting data for interpretation and analyses, as well as evaluating and reporting on the research findings (Creswell, 1994, 2002).

Within the tradition of qualitative inquiry, there are a multitude of research designs. "A research design is a statement of procedures through which one can gather information that addresses the research purpose in a simple, elegant, and systematic way" (Palys, 1992, p. 80). The present study is qualitative in nature, employing a case study research design. As the researcher, I sought to bracket my own prior experiences as a second-career (former) teacher candidate, so that I could articulate the stories of 3 such second-career male teachers, a nontraditional group of teacher education students, and thereby "gain an in-depth understanding of meaning of those involved" (Merriam, 1998, p. 19).

There was a need to understand the problem and its processes, not just from my experiences in a teacher education program but also from the perspectives of the participants (Merriam, 1998). As a researcher, I was interested primarily in "insight, discovery, and interpretation in context" (pp. 28-29), which are the described qualities of



a case study approach. The purpose of a case study is to identify phenomena through the perceptions of the participants in a situation and to understand processes and context. Ultimately, there emerged an understanding of lived experience (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Creswell, 1994; Merriam). These perceptions were gathered and then clustered into themes to shed light on their connected relationship to the phenomena that were studied (Conle, 2000). The design helped gain insights into the participants' motivations to become teachers and their actions during their teacher education programs. Consistent with case study research, the design included data from a small number of participants in ways that developed patterns and relationships of meaning "within a single unit or bounded system" (Merriam, p. 19).

My educational background has been founded in both andragogical and pedagogical methods. In keeping with these traditions, my role in this investigation was to conduct the study. This case study approach contributed to the development of meaning and gave philosophical consistency to Dewey's insight, "that it is central to understand a participant's experience as continuous" (Dewey, 1938, p. 47).

### **Research Methodology and Design**

Typically, case study research employs the collection of various types of data: interviews, stories, and observations, as well as other documentation such as reflections, diaries, and field notes (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Creswell, 1994). Given these possible data sources, I used the following methods to gather, interpret, and analyze the information gleaned from 3 second-career male teachers that had negotiated their way successfully through teacher education programs. Data collection methods for this qualitative study were a blend of one email questionnaire, two one-on-one,

semistructured interviews, and the researcher's field notes and reflections. Ascribing to the principle of nondirection in interviewing meant that the responsibility for the course of discussion rested with the participant, but the interviewer retained control of the questions that were asked (Cohen & Manion, 1989, cited in McNay, 2001). The development of the interview protocols focussed on the central problem of interviewing to uncover the relationship between discourse and its meaning (Mishler, 1986). This predisposed textual data to analysis for its basic meaning and its essence of description. These two criteria formed the basis of theme selection and depiction. Meaning was contextually grounded, which is consistent with the case study approach (Merriam, 1998; Mishler).

This study sought to understand second-career male teachers, their experiences, motivations, barriers, behaviours, and beliefs, as they had negotiated their way through teacher education programs. Case study work is interpretive and never independent of the observer (Creswell, 2002; Merriam, 1998). Awareness of this allowed me to approach second-career male teacher education graduates and gather their reflections on their teacher program experiences. Using case study in conjunction with my personal narrative experience allowed me to explore occupational adaptation amongst second-career males as they negotiated through teacher education programs. Through the descriptions of the participants' perspectives, this research attempted to present and make meaning of the experiences that this nontraditional population encountered while becoming teachers. As Merriam states, it is important "in this type of research to understand the perspectives of those involved in the phenomenon of interest, to uncover the complexity of human

behaviour in a contextual framework, and to present a holistic interpretation of what is happening” (p. 203).

### **Pilot Study**

In the winter of 2006, an independent study was completed in order to investigate issues that one second-career male encountered in his pursuit of teacher education. The intent of this pilot research was to develop and refine a methodology that would help investigate the experiences of other second-career males as teacher candidates. There was a focus on garnering information about the factors that impacted on his consideration of teaching as a second profession and the relevance of his training on his current professional practice. This single-participant pilot study was instrumental in helping the researcher define the qualitative methodology to be used in the present study and contributed significantly to the design of the email questionnaire and related interview protocols. These instruments were refined and used in the present thesis research to gather information from the second-career males in teacher education programs.

The pilot study drew the researcher’s attention to the potential richness of using a case study methodology in conducting his future thesis research. The literature review revealed changing demographic patterns in the Ontario educational system, as contemporary teachers now come from a multitude of cultural and ethnic backgrounds. The pilot project was, in itself, an excellent training instrument. Having had very little previous experience in research, I needed to learn how to listen for voice, identify relationships, recognize stakeholders of context and power, and to be especially “sensitive to the nuances of change and issues of complexity” (Yin, 2003, p. 60). The participant in this study spoke from multiple perspectives (i.e., former businessman,

former student, teacher, husband, and coach), each with its individual context, time, perspective, and place. The research provided themes, some of which confirmed the existing literature and others that needed further investigation. The pilot study was used to “provide considerable insight into the basic issues being studied” (p. 80).

Of particular interest, the pilot project identified a theme of reverse discrimination (based on gender) not anticipated from a review of the literature or in the developed protocol. The participant had pursued his teacher education program under the presumption that an older male would be given preference in the education labour market over a similarly qualified female applicant. This expectation had been formed and based on information found in the media, education journals, and magazines. Much had been made of the shortage of males in teaching and the efforts that were being undertaken to help redress this gender imbalance. As a mature older male, the pilot study participant believed that he was better positioned over female applicants to enter the education job market once his program had been completed. However, even given the provocative findings, as a burgeoning researcher, I recognized that a single-participant case study could not provide the comparative analysis necessary to further investigate this anomaly.

### **Selection of the Participants**

Through purposeful selective sampling, the researcher intentionally selected participants for study in order to learn about and understand the phenomenon under consideration (Creswell, 2002; Merriam, 1998). Participants were intentionally sought to meet the criteria for inclusion in the thesis study (Palys, 1992). Second-career male teachers were strategically sampled because they were “effective for particularly enlightening cases where a phenomenon displayed unique qualities and defining trait

characteristics” (Creswell, p. 196). This purposeful sampling is termed “homogeneous sampling” because the participants were members of “a subgroup that had defining characteristics” (Creswell, p. 196). As practicing second-career male teachers certified to teach in Ontario, each participant had constructed his own personal meaning of education and teaching philosophy based on his lived experiences and practice. Each participant came from a different first-career work background. Based on these unique experiences and varied expertise in subject areas, the participants presented qualities that were rich for case study research. These unique participant characteristics provided “common sense obviousness” (Merriam, p. 28) as the necessary boundaries to case study research.

Participants in this study were Caucasian males. Two of the participants had family originating from the British Isles, and one had family from a Mediterranean background. All were former businessmen that had achieved middle management positions in their chosen fields. The participants had primarily worked in forums chiefly dominated by men with women being sparingly represented.

This selective representation provides a narrow focus that impacts upon the findings of this study. These were men in positions of power working in professions dominated by men and surrounded by men as coworkers. They were used to working autonomously and decisively to achieve their personal and corporate goals. As such they entertained high expectations towards achieving goals in their teacher education programs as part of their career change process.

### **Introduction to the Participants**

Three males of varying ages volunteered to participate in this qualitative case study. The participants came from different professional backgrounds and had a

minimum of 10 years of work in this first career. Each had successfully negotiated his way through a teacher education program, and each was successfully certified in Ontario. Participants had transitioned into teaching within 3 years of this study. All 3 of the participants were and continue to teach in elementary schools throughout southern Ontario.

### *George*

George was the youngest member participating in this study, as he had indicated his age between 32 and 42 years. He is a first generation Canadian born to immigrant parents who expressed concern and scepticism about his desire to transition into teaching as a second career. His parents, according to George, had a difficult time understanding that a professional could expect to have multiple careers over a working lifetime. Originally trained as an architect, George worked in this field for only a couple of years on a freelance basis before he changed to a career in the insurance industry.

After a number of years in the insurance industry, George was given more responsibility and promoted to a managerial position, supervising 14 company employees. As a manager, he enjoyed conducting meetings, training new employees, and mentoring long-term employees into other positions of responsibility. However, after a number of years, George found that his feelings about his professional life waned, and he believed that he was not important to the process. As he put it, "I did not feel that I was making a significant difference, but was rather just another cog in the industrial wheel" (Interview, March 1, 2007).

George is married with one child. Approximately a year prior to his decision to become a teacher, George was involved in a serious vehicle accident which afforded him

a lot of time to reflect on where his career was going. He discovered that it was important to him to work at something that would make a concrete difference in his life—something that his business career was not providing. He applied to several teacher education programs in Ontario but was unsuccessful in his application process. He then applied to a teacher education program offered in the United States. He was accepted into this program, successfully completed it, and became certified to teach in Ontario. Within his program, George found a high number of male second-career candidates from Ontario, which made him wonder if mature candidates were being overlooked by Ontario teacher education programs.

Subsequent to being certified, George taught on a part-time basis while searching for a full-time position. It took him approximately a year to find his current teaching position. George has found many parallels between being a former manager in business and being a teacher. His greatest fulfillment comes from being able to use his creativity, which he believed was not utilized in his business career. In many ways, he appears to have become a teacher repudiating the absence of values in his previous career.

### *Jim*

Within this small, homogeneous group of participants, Jim was the eldest; he was between the ages of 52 and 62 years. During his formative school years, Jim travelled between four Canadian provinces. He claims that this has helped him understand some of the problems children face in this modern mobile world and to empathize with their concerns when they move and enter new schools.

Jim worked for many years in a highly technical industry where he honed his expertise by tutoring selected clients on the development and uses of standardized

accounting software packages. He became adept at developing integrated study guides, and today Jim feels very comfortable sharing his technological expertise with the children that he teaches. Eventually, Jim left the company he was working for and struck out on his own. He owned and operated a small consulting firm that catered to the customized training and implementation of accounting software.

Jim has sacrificed much on his journey to becoming a certified teacher. For 3 years prior to his acceptance into a program he attended courses at another institution in order to make up credits that he was lacking. During this time, he had to balance academics with his responsibilities as a family caregiver. Once accepted into a teacher education program, Jim experienced financial difficulties that are not uncommon amongst older males that have changed careers. He believes that it will take him approximately 10 years to eliminate the financial debt that he incurred.

Finally, Jim is a cancer survivor. He became debilitated during his teacher education program for a number of months and completed his outstanding course credits months after his cohort. Jim vividly remembers being told during his teacher education program that there was a need to have more mature males in the classroom, yet once he graduated, he found that the employment opportunities were not so abundant.

Jim has worked for 2 years as an occasional teacher in southern Ontario. Though he believes that second-career males bring a wealth of practical experience to teaching, he is aware that there is a present lack of opportunity for this select group of teaching professionals. He continues to teach as an occasional teacher, stating that he is living just slightly below the poverty level.



*Robert*

Robert is a quiet, reflective, soft-spoken individual between the ages of 42 and 52 years. He arrived at teaching after spending many years working on a multitude of projects as a structural engineer. Robert openly expresses that he needed a change from the ethics of the business world, as it was no longer rewarding for him on a personal level. He recognized that he was struggling with a number of career options and knew that he did not want to continue doing the same job until he retired. He was looking for a more flexible lifestyle with varied rewards and more personal interactions. Associates encouraged him to enter the teaching profession and indicated that he had a wonderful ability to explain technical concepts to nontechnical people in a clear manner. Robert was also attracted by the prospect that as a teacher he would have his summers off.

Robert's decision to enter a teacher education program was strongly supported by his wife, but his two children were not as encouraging. As he put it, "They [Robert's children] wondered if I had finally gone over to the dark side" (Questionnaire, February 24, 2007). Robert found the application process frustrating especially since each of the Ontario teacher education programs to which he applied had different sets of requirements and criteria. In the end, he successfully gained access to a teacher education program and graduated with distinction.

Several months after graduation, Robert began employment interviews in search of a full-time teaching position. He found that most principals were looking for teacher candidates who had strong organizational abilities as well as good interpersonal skills—the latter were attributes that Robert believed that he had honed in his first career. Coupled with his strong knowledge of technology, Robert believes that he had an

advantage over teacher candidate applicants with lesser work experiences. Several months after graduation, Robert was hired by an Ontario board as a math and technology teacher and continues to teach in this capacity. Robert was the only research participant that underwent a mentoring process as part of his first year of teaching.

### **Instrumentation**

Triangulation is a military term used to describe a technique of validation and location of common events, information, and themes in qualitative research (Creswell, 1994). In qualitative research, triangulation is used as a method of validating data that are collected and collated from a variety of sources and other locations (Creswell, 1994, 2002). In this study, triangulation was accomplished through gathering data from three primary research sources: an email questionnaire, two audiotaped interviews, and the researcher's notes.

This study used the techniques of sequential triangulation, where the researcher used three phases of study, with the results of the first phase being essential for the planning and implementation of the second and third phases (Creswell, 1994; Merriam, 1998). Field notes were kept in conjunction with the interview protocols that were administered. This provided documentation concerning place, time, and observer comments that helped triangulate and substantiate the emergent findings.

The following sequence of instrumentation was used with each participant. In order to collect initial data, an email questionnaire was forwarded to each participant's electronic signature (see Appendix A). When the questionnaire was returned, a meeting was arranged at the participant's convenience, and an audiotaped interview was conducted using the protocol (see Appendix B). After analyzing the documentation

garnered from the questionnaire and first interview, a follow-up interview (see Appendix C) was conducted to explore and confirm the previously provided data and clarify any points of ambiguity that had arisen. During this process and at every stage, the researcher maintained a set of field notes consisting of observations and commentary that were pertinent to the study and added content, context, and texture. In this way, the instruments helped shape an understanding of the phenomenon by offering data anchored in experience and real-life situations as told by the participants in their own words and stories.

### **Instrument Validation**

The instruments used in this study were developed, tested, and validated in the previous pilot research as part of an independent study. A questionnaire and an interview protocol were specifically constructed to meet the requirements of the phenomena under investigation. These instruments were originally applied to a single second-career male participant. The researcher and his advisor scrutinized each instrument, and feedback was solicited from the participant. The instruments were refined accordingly for the purpose of working with a larger number of participants.

### **Data Collection and Analysis**

Each participant first completed the questionnaire (Appendix A) and returned it via email to the researcher. When the questionnaires were returned, the researcher contacted each participant and arranged a meeting in a neutral and private location. An interview protocol was forwarded to each participant prior to the selected meeting date. At this meeting, the interview was conducted using the previously forwarded interview protocol (Appendix B). The interview was audiotaped and transcribed by the researcher.

To add context and texture to the interview data, the researcher took field notes and maintained a journal of his own reflections concerning the interview process. The researcher debriefed with participants after the taped interview.

All collected data were collated, analyzed, and coded thematically. Themes which emerged in each of the participant's responses were chosen for identification and cross-case analysis. The identification of themes offered an opportunity to understand the complexities of the participants' experiences and added meaning and depth (Creswell, 2002). Data that emerged from common experiences were chosen for further investigation and analysis. At this point a second interview protocol was designed to expand upon common themes and forwarded to the participants via email. A second interview date was established with all participants. This second interview protocol was in response to questions and points of interest that had emerged from the initial questionnaire and/or the first interview. This interview served to refine and triangulate the data and clear up any points of misconception or ambiguity that had occurred. This interview also served the researcher by providing an opportunity to thank the participants firsthand for having taken part in the study.

### **Methodological Assumptions**

This study is framed and interwoven with the participants' narratives as they described to the researcher their experiences as second-career males seeking teacher certification in Ontario. As such, the researcher has made every effort to be "non-judgemental, sensitive, and respectful" (Merriam, 1998, p. 87) of the participants' dialogue, recollections, experiences, and opinions throughout the study process. During the data collection process, my own experiences as a second-career male teacher were

bracketed (Bednall, 2006) or held at arm's length from the participants' data. Having passed through the process of being a second-career male in a teacher education program, I was aware that there were other nuances and factors yet to be discerned. It was the intention of this thesis to study and consider these career change experiences and allow meaning to become shared.

### **Limitations**

The purposeful homogeneous sampling procedure of this study decreases the generalizability of the findings. The findings of this study are not generalizable to all teacher education program candidates, as these candidates were of one gender and from professional business backgrounds. Furthermore, this study did not interview or question second-career male teachers who, for one reason or another, were no longer actively teaching. The participant sample of second-career males who are employed as teachers is a precise group.

There is a temporal limitation to this study. Reflecting on and interpreting a process from one's historical context (i.e., the past) can be very different from that which is ascribed when one is in the immediacy of a process (i.e., the present). Timelines can alter perceptual interpretation and meaning (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Consequently, the findings in this study could be subject to other interpretations (Creswell, 1994).

The use of case study design in this research is what Merriam (1998) describes as "interest of process rather than outcomes, in context rather than a specific variable, in discovery rather than confirmation (p.19)." The focus of interest in this study is on career change and not issues of hegemonic masculinities centering on power and competitiveness in males as explored by Skelton (2007). Guba and Lincoln as found in

Merriam (1998) warn that “case studies can oversimplify or exaggerate a situation leading the reader to erroneous conclusions about the actual state of affairs.” They further add that “readers may think that case studies are accounts of the whole when in reality they are but a part a slice of life” (Merriam, p. 42). As such, findings in this case study only represent three second-career males who entered teacher education and the assumptions the researcher has drawn based on common experiences, emergent themes, and collated data. The experiences articulated by the participants in this study may or may not be unique to only this demographic.

Lastly, Merriam (1998) mentions that case studies are limited by the researchers “sensitivity” and “integrity” (p. 42). Even though I attempted to hold my own experiences at arms length during this process as a researcher, there were areas of common experiences that I clearly identified with and recognized. I have tried to keep these identifications limited to my own learning journals as opposed having them influence the demographic I was working with. Flyvbjerg (2006) points out that there a belief that case study contains a bias towards verification, that is, a tendency to confirm the researcher’s preconceived notions. The participants in this study deserve to have their voices heard without the researcher’s interference. They have honoured me with their stories, experiences, and trust. Issues arising from lack of representativeness, reliability, validity, and generalizability lie solely with my own researcher “subjectivity” and “bias” as described by Hamel in Merriam (1998, p. 43).

### **Establishing Credibility**

Credibility was established through both triangulation and the process of member checking. In qualitative research, triangulation is used as a method of validating data that

are collected and collated from a variety of sources and other locations (Creswell, 1994, 2002). In this study, as previously stated, triangulation was established, as data were gathered from a number of sources.

In particular, the audiotaped interview protocol responses and any salient conversations were transcribed and returned to the participants for validation and consensual processing. Only after the participants agreed to the accuracy of the transcriptions were the data subjected to analyses and incorporated into the study. Themes that arose from the analysis were culled, coded, and returned to the participants for a second member check. Each participant had the opportunity to verify, explain, add, or clarify after each instrument had been administered as part of a member check process. Anything construed to be sensitive or misinterpreted by the participants was corrected and/or deleted upon request. The findings were presented to the participants in a formal report.

### **Ethical Considerations**

In accordance with Brock University Research Ethics Board requirements, researchers working with human participants are required to seek approval and consent. No research was undertaken or data gathered prior to board clearance. Application for *Ethical Review of Research Involving Human Participants* was made, and clearance to complete this research was obtained (see Appendix D).

Participants in this study were assigned pseudonyms in order to ensure confidentiality, allowing them to comment freely on and express their opinions concerning the instructional methodologies used to prepare them for the teaching profession. This was of importance, since the purpose of this qualitative study was to gain

an in-depth understanding of the experiences of second-career males during their teacher education program.

### **Restatement of the Area of Study**

Case study research design and techniques were used to solicit data from 3 participants that had successfully negotiated teacher education programs. Data were collected through an email questionnaire, two open-ended one-on-one interviews, and the researcher's reflections and notes on the interview process. These data were coded, analyzed for emerging trends, compared, collated, and are presented as a series of findings in Chapter Four.



## CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

This study was designed to describe the phenomenon that 3 second-career males underwent as they transitioned from their first careers to teaching by seeking their perceptions and beliefs through personal accounts. It was undertaken with the hope that the information would add to the sparse literature that already exists on this topic. This qualitative case study used instruments such as an email questionnaire and 2 one-on-one, semistructured, audiotaped interviews. The male participants were 3 current teachers working in Ontario that had transitioned from professional first careers into teaching. The data in this study were analyzed through constant comparison, and this chapter provides details of the findings that emerged from the investigation. Some of these findings confirm and refute preexisting literature and, where applicable, this has been directly indicated in this chapter.

Chapter Four is organized into five sections, each of which describes a theme that emerged from participants' data. The first section, **The Motivation To Teach**, presents the participants' motivational factors and the impulses that initially drew them into teacher education programs. The second section, **Teacher Education Experiences**, looks at a number of common and anomalous experiences that the participants encountered during their teacher education programs. The third section, **Instructional Methodologies**, presents the participants' perspectives as mature second-career male students on the instructional methods in their teacher education programs. The fourth section, **Attitudes of Fellow Teacher Candidates, Friends, Colleagues, and Family**, probes how these 3 second-career teachers viewed their interactions and relationships with their program instructors and fellow teacher candidates. Finally, the fifth section,

**Teacher Induction**, looks at the participants' reflections on their transition into teaching as second-career males.

### **The Motivation to Teach**

The participants in this study reported a number of factors that motivated them to enter teacher education programs: working with young people; the pursuit of an increased sense of personal achievement; and job satisfaction. Research into the motives of second-career applicants has been well documented in the prevailing literature (e.g., Bennett, 1988; Bradley, 2000; Budge, 1998; Chambers & Roper, 2000; Gardner, 1998; Hill, 1996; McNay, 2001). As such, the second-career participants in this study expressed a number of common altruistic motivations. Each clearly stated that they liked children and wanted to work with them—a notion also described by other researchers (e.g., Bradley; Budge; Gardner; Hill). All participants felt that they had a positive contribution to make as future teachers (Bennett; Coulter & McNay, 1993; Hill; McNay).

Participants added that the profession was attractive to them because it tended to fit well with other family commitments (Chambers & Roper, 2000). Robert expressed this when he said, “I have to be honest, the summers off sounded attractive” (Questionnaire, February 2007) and “I needed a more flexible lifestyle” (Interview, March 2007). George, affected by the birth of his son, wanted to be more involved in his family life and specifically the parenting of his new child. All of the participants in this study desired closer ties to their children and families as well as time as family caregivers.

Two of the 3 participants expressed a desire to teach a subject that they were passionate about (Hill, 1996; Milloy, 2003). They expressed a desire to pass along their

enthusiasm to students. Robert phrased it this way: “I wanted to share my experiences from the science and technology side of things” (Interview, June, 2007). All of the participants indicated that, for them, becoming a teacher was an opportunity to provide some meaningful service and give back something they had been given a chance to attain (McNay, 2001; Milloy). Jim expressed it this way: “I wanted to make a difference with kids” (Interview, June 2007), and Robert asserted that he “wanted to share” his experiences (Interview, March 2007). The expressions of an opportunity to serve, or to be of service in some capacity, revealed that each former teacher candidate had made a deliberate second-career choice (Bradley, 2000; McNay), and eagerly looked forward to having one successful career followed by another (Bennett, 1988; Freidus, 1992).

Participants in this study described themselves as having an image of being healthy role models for children (especially boys), a notion not inconsistent with the findings of Berliner (2004), Jamieson (2005), and Milloy (2003). As current teachers working in a variety of boards across Ontario, each expressed high levels of professional confidence and personal gratification with his new career. Similar findings are found in the works of Bradley (2000), Milloy, Chambers and Roper (2000), and McNay (2001).

It was interesting to note that for the second-career teachers who participated in this case study the desire to enter the teaching profession was initiated for each of them by a major turning point or event in their adult lives. It is not uncommon for adults to reassess their current careers after having gone through some sort of dramatic life change or crisis (Cross, 1981). It has been documented (Crow et al., 1990) that lifecycle changes affect the way individuals perceive themselves and their work, specifically in concerns of midlife issues such as identity, relationships, births, deaths, and family life. For George,

the birth of his first child awakened a strong desire to work with children. In addition, a near fatal motor vehicle accident afforded George the time to reflect upon the direction in which his life and first career were taking him. Jim's experiences as a cancer patient added urgency to his desire for change and also provided him with time to consider other career options. Robert expressed personal disenchantment with the manner that his career path had been developing. "I just could not see myself doing the same job until I retire. I no longer found the work I was doing to be rewarding. You could call it a midlife crisis and some [people] have" (Personal communication, July 2005).

Each of the participants, at one time, had worked with children in a number of capacities as volunteers, coaches, tutors, and unqualified teachers. Jim believed that his volunteer work in schools provided him with firsthand observations that helped give him a better defined sense of the profession. In Jim's case, this volunteer work with children was followed by the upgrading of his academic profile. George had spent several years as junior soccer coach working with young boys, teaching basic game fundamentals, rules, and skills. Robert also stated, "I had coached boys of all ages in sports and enjoyed that. I had also received positive comments about my coaching" (Personal communication, July 2005).

The participants in this study each came from well-respected sectors of the business community. Each of them had spent a considerable number of years in apprenticeships and then moved into positions of responsibility and authority within organizations that recognized their accumulated experience and knowledge. The participants were in highly competitive independent careers that they had found

interesting, rewarding, and lucrative at this early stage of their career development. Yet, something changed along the way for each of them.

It became evident from the participants' statements that they had little residual enthusiasm within their first careers. Robert articulated the process most succinctly when he said, "I needed a change from the business world and the boring routines" (Interview, March 2007). George suggested that, for him, what was required was a change in the meaning of the work he wanted to do, and he recognized that in some ways his transition to teaching as a career was a type of repudiation of the values that existed in his previous career. "I kind of lost interest in the business world. I felt that what I was doing was unimportant and rather redundant. I wanted to make a difference, and this was not something I was getting in my previous career" (Interview, March 2007). Once he had the time to reassess his first career Jim said,

I wanted to find something that provided a little more meaning to my life (Field notes, April 2007). There were portions of my first career that I wanted to continue, but I wanted to change the direction [of my career] in order to have more meaning (Interview, June 2007).

I knew I wanted to work with children. I wanted to try to make a difference, a positive impact on them. (Interview, July 2007).

In individual ways, each of the study participants suggested that the rewards which once had been the significant motivators in their first careers no longer held any interest for them. Further, their first careers appeared to be no longer engaging or interesting from a business perspective. These beliefs were in marked contrast to what they expressed as the potential possibilities that a career in teaching could present. For

George, “making a difference [was important] as it was something I wasn’t getting in my previous career” (Interview, March 2007). Jim voiced the same concerns when he mused that his illness forced him to reassess his previous career aspirations and face the conclusion that he needed to find a career that provided more rewards and meaning to his life. Similarly, Robert expressed:

I knew there would be different rewards from the business world . . . teaching seemed to allow for more varied rewards and more personal interaction . . . I thought about changing jobs instead of careers, but I concluded that would only change the scenery, not the problem. To say that I no longer found the work rewarding would be an understatement, and I could not see myself doing the same job until I retire. (Robert, Correspondence, July 2007)

As such, the participants’ expressions were consistent with the findings of Crow et al. (1990), who found that some second-career changers appear to become disillusioned with their previous occupations because they no longer find the profit motive fulfilling.

Beyond the *job dissatisfaction* and the desire to change *the meaning of their work*, the participants had the desire to do something that was more personally fulfilling:

I was struggling with career options and felt that I needed a more flexible lifestyle . . . I wanted something that would make a more personal real-world impact. . . . And I have to be honest . . . having the summers off sounded real attractive. (Robert, Interview, March 2007)

George expressed it as a total loss of interest in the business world, as he felt that the work he was doing was unimportant and redundant, “I wanted a bit more variety than what I had been doing, a bit more personal associations, [I was] looking for a change

really” (Interview, March 2007). George’s feelings about his professional life were that he was not important to the process. He did not feel that he was making a significant difference but rather that he was just another cog in the wheel of business. This disaffection with the work in which he was involved, coupled with a high interest in nurturing and spending time with his young family, awakened in George a desire to do something more fulfilling. “Teaching is a more personal type of service function and career” (George, Interview, March 2007).

It was clear during the interview with Jim that he had a strong image of himself as a teacher. A portion of the job description in Jim’s former career had been in training and development:

I worked with clients teaching them how to use accounting software packages and wanted to continue that aspect of my former job. . . . That’s a part of my former career that I enjoyed, and so that’s the avenue I wanted to pursue and continue on with in my life . . . I developed and implemented study guides, spoke at conferences, and even trained in one-on-one scenarios. (Jim, Interviews, June and July 2007)

Jim felt that his transition to teaching was a natural continuation of the experiences that he had gained in his first career. In this sense, his first career had helped him develop and move towards a teaching career. “But, there are more rewards in teaching than I ever experienced in my previous job” (Jim, Interview, July 2007).

Each of the participants expressed concern over salary loss during their program and could understand how low salaries for beginning teachers were an economic deterrent to the profession. They indicated that potential second-career candidates should

weigh this concern prior to initiating their transition into teaching and accept it as part of the process. The participants indicated that a large share of economics is integrated in all decisions to change careers. Overall, when these second-career males were considering the transition into teaching, they factored in economic considerations and built in allowances and concessions as part of their professional requirements. Jim stated, “I balanced my full-time studies with some consulting work, but I found this difficult, especially with trying to be a full-time caregiver and a student” (Questionnaire, April 2007). Jim had some expertise as a general public accountant and managed to work at this part time (Field notes, April 2007). “My wife works, and she was extremely supportive of my endeavours,” said Robert. “Though I knew we would be economically all right, I wondered about the financial impact on the family that was associated with the loss of my income for the year” (Interview, June 2007). George mentioned that his wife, though less than totally supportive, was financially able to mitigate a short-term loss of secondary income (Interview, March 2007). “What helped immensely was that I came into a small inheritance that more than helped make up the shortfall. I used this as an investment in the future” (Questionnaire, January 2007).

All of the participants noted that they anticipated entering the profession quickly after completing their teacher education programs. Jim pointed out that there appeared to be a specific demand for male teachers in the professional periodicals that he had read. Jim commented that he fully expected to be hired quickly after graduation. He noted that he was surprised and disappointed that he had not been hired on permanently or been offered a full-time contract (Field notes, June 2007/ Interview, July 2007). Robert indicated that he had networked successfully prior to completing his teacher education



studies and had secured an interview prior to program completion. "I had been worried about there being a position out there for me when I graduated. From everything I had heard, male teachers were in demand" (Questionnaire, February 2007). George had read various newspapers and commercial publications as part of his job search preparation. As a result he had anticipated an easy time being hired for a teaching position (Field notes, January 2007).

### **Teacher Education Experiences**

Prior to entering teacher education, the socioeconomic status of these participants was substantial enough to allow them to buffer themselves from extreme economic hardship. Yet, like most second-career teacher candidates (Brember et al., 2002; Chambers & Roper, 2000; McNay, 2001; Milloy, 2003), all of the participants still incurred debt and financial challenges during their teacher education year. Robert and Jim commented on the uncertainty associated with the lack of income as a source of major concern. Jim openly stated that it would take him several years to eliminate the debt from the loss of full-time income that he incurred. George, who had a young family, said that the loss of income during the school year was a major concern and hinted that there were issues associated with that in his family. These financial pressures imposed stress on the participants during a time in which they were also experiencing stress from university recruitment and teacher education programmatic issues.

An aspect that all participants in this study described as frustrating was the university recruitment process. Though there are standardized application procedures, universities have unique and disparate entrance requirements. Some ask for high school transcripts that for second-career applicants are remote and difficult to access. Second-

career males often question why secondary school transcripts are necessary when they are previous university graduates. Robert phrased it in this manner: "I often felt that one hand of the university didn't know what the other was doing. . . . Each university [he had applied to three] had different requirements, and there was a lot of reference and leg work to do" (Interviews, March and June 2007). Jim, a vociferous participant, expressed it this way: "To me it was just a bunch of bullshit to go through, and some of the web sites used by universities are just plain confusing" (Interview, June 2007). Even after everything seemingly had been sorted out, both Jim and Robert experienced communication problems with their institutions' administrations. Jim, with an extensive background in technology and information systems, found university information sites convoluted and confusing. "There were a lot of fundamental things that could have been done better, and the people manning information centers were not much help" (Field notes, June 2007). Robert vented his frustration by saying that what was required was "a more consistent application process between all universities, especially in their interview and reference structures" (Interview, March 2007).

George, on the other hand, who had graduated from an American teaching institution, found the system relatively quick, smooth, and painless compared to the experiences of the other 2 study participants. He had missed the deadlines for the Ontario teacher education institutions and commented on the inflexibility and rigidity of the Canadian system: "I often wondered why the Canadian system needed such an inordinate amount of time to process an application. It seemed strange" (George, Interview March, 2007). George found the American process quick, efficient, and relatively easy. Two of

the 3 participants in this study found the bureaucratic processes they were forced to undergo as part of the recruitment process frustrating.

In addition to the amount of paperwork required within strict timelines, Jim also took exception to the documentation of the practical experience that was necessary. Jim found this analysis to be open to subjective interpretation and evaluation. At his institution, this contributed to a glut of teacher candidates that were accepted into the program. “Originally they [the university] were supposed to accept 150 or so students. They ended up accepting 300, and so in late August they hired a whole bunch of professors on contract just to get through the school year. You can imagine the chaos,” he added (Jim, Interview, June 2007).

### **Program Teaching**

Participants held distinct perspectives on the courses and practica that they engaged in during their teacher education programs.

#### *Coursework Experiences*

When asked for their assessment of the coursework that was mandated as part of their teacher education programs, the participants expressed comments about two aspects of program curriculum: material relevance and presentation methods. George, who had attended a program in the United States, spoke of how much he enjoyed some of his coursework because

it emphasized creativity, and we had a lot of professors that encouraged us not to fall into the trap of having students just open the page to a chapter or teach from a text. . . . There were a few courses where you just sit back and take notes. Others

were a little more involved, but on the whole I think their program had a good balance. (Interview, March 2007)

George did not seem particularly enthused with courses where professors used what he termed “boring PowerPoint lectures to teach the class” (Field notes, June 2007) and he indicated that he thought that the hands-on approach had been good in his program because

it’s a lot more difficult for males to jump from the theory to the practical. . . . A little of my frustration with some of the program had to do with the information being boring and not hands-on. We had one instructor that wasn’t really focussing on what he was supposed to be teaching us. (Interview, June 2007)

Robert also had some very specific complaints concerning what he had experienced in his teacher education program courses:

There were times when I was bored. The assessment course seemed to be nothing more than read this article and reflecting on it in a group . . . and psychology seemed to be just one big lecture . . . You always think that the courses could be more interesting. That’s when you begin to question the relevance of what you are doing. (Interviews, March and June 2007)

In some courses that he had attended and that related to teaching methods and strategies, Robert saw very little relevance to teacher preparation and could not discern an association to the teaching of children in today’s modern world. “The instructor hadn’t been in the classroom in a number of years, so it seemed she was out of date. . . . There were times when we were all scratching our heads about it” (Interview and Field notes, June 2007).

“As an adult,” Robert explained, “I found it hard to stay focussed when we were working in groups during the program” (Field notes, June 2007). In his first career, he had worked independently, setting his own timelines and deadlines. Group work, as presented in his teacher education program, encouraged collegial sharing of the workload—Robert felt that he had very little overall control. Robert admitted that this had been most difficult for him to adapt to and that he sometimes questioned himself as to whether the co-operative learning strategies he was learning would work with his future students (Interview, June 2007). Looking back, Robert maintains that he did not find the group work helpful in teaching him anything about professional teaching practices.

During Jim’s teacher education coursework, specific problems emerged that were directly linked to a larger than normal intake of teacher candidates. The Ontario university that he attended more than doubled its intake of students in that specific year and then found it necessary to scramble to provide instructors, teaching locations, proper texts, and adequate associate teachers. Jim specifically referred to a lack of cohesion on the part of the university due to poor program planning. The way courses were presented was, in his words, “chaotic,” and he

knew that there was a lack of information flowing amongst the staff. One professor was totally blind to what another professor was doing. The result was an awful lot of work being duplicated in different courses, and a lot of the professors were working with last year’s material that was not their own. (Jim, Interview, June 2007)

The teacher education program that Jim attended required him to be there for excessively long periods of time, yet could not provide adequate support service logistics that worked around its own inconsistent course scheduling. Jim became sick during his teacher education program and was forced to take a leave of absence in order to take care of pressing medical concerns. When he was well enough to return, he was informed that he did not have to repeat the entire program but that he had to make up the coursework in order to fulfill and meet the remaining program credit requirements. “When I did go back to make up courses, I hit the double cohort whammy that meant that all of the courses I wanted were filled up” (Interview, June 2007). Jim chose a secondary array of course offerings and completed his program.

### *Practica*

In general, a practicum is a course of study designed especially for the preparation of teachers and clinicians that involves the supervised practical application of previously studied theory. “A teaching practica provides the opportunity to apply concepts in a supervised learning environment. It provides a focus and supervision for teaching/learning with a master which builds on synthesis and integration skills of the mentor/supervisor” (Ralston, Lerner, Mullis, Simerly, & Murray, 2000, p. 31). As a critical foundational tool where teacher candidates gain experience and professionalism for their future careers, it is essential that they be matched with practitioners who can successfully mentor and guide them.

Each of the 3 participants in this study reported negative experiences in the practica portions of their teacher education programs. These experiences caused such distress for 2 of the second-career candidates that, at one point, they considered exiting

their programs before successful completion and certification. Successful intervention from faculty advisors and practica supervisors allowed these candidates to overcome barriers. However these challenges impacted on the candidates' overall experiences and suggest that there be an examination of the parameters, policies, and procedures used to qualify associate teachers.

*Robert.* Robert's experiences during his practica were not as visceral as the 2 other participants' experiences. Robert had the opportunity to have a male associate in his first practicum that he respected. In fact, Robert believed that his induction into teaching would have been difficult had he not been mentored by his first associate teacher. "He helped me avoid and step over some of the land mines along the way" (Interview, June 2007). Robert consulted his first associate teacher on issues that he encountered during his second and third practica. When probed to ask how he dealt with issues that arose with these associate teachers he responded, "In order to smooth out issues, I always tried to go with the flow" (Robert, Interview, June 2007).

Robert also had difficulty getting used to the high incidence of teacher negativity and opinions expressed by veteran teachers in the staff rooms. "In some cases it got to the point where I just avoided the staff rooms completely and ended up having my breaks and lunches in the classroom" (Field notes, March 2007). Robert noted that the practica afforded him the opportunity to see directly how family situations affect a child's learning. There were times when he became discouraged and disheartened because he knew that there were students that he could not help.

*Jim.* Jim was the victim of allegations during a teaching practicum that were subsequently investigated and deemed to be unfounded. Jim was very reluctant to

disclose details of these allegations against his professionalism that were laid by female students. He did not want to speak of it “in a public capacity” (Interview, July 2007), adding that the issues were both personal and professional and still resolved only partially to his satisfaction. He described the episode as the low point of his program and serious enough to actually withdraw his candidature. When Jim inquired as to whether this was an issue that warranted a detention, suspension, or even expulsion, because of its seriousness, he was told that the institution could not advise him on that and so left things “in the air and hanging” (Interview, June 2007). During this tumult, Jim reported that he received very little support or direction from his associate teacher, school principal, or superintendent. “I went to my associate teacher first, but she didn’t know how to deal with it and told me that she didn’t appreciate this sort of problem” (Interview, June 2007). From this point on in his practicum, his associate teacher made things very difficult for him and subsequently rated him as a borderline candidate. Even after the allegations were proven to be unfounded, the school’s administrators were more concerned with “not rocking the parental boat” (Jim, Field notes, June 2007).

Jim believed that he survived this crisis through the judicious intervention and support from university instructors, his program director, and his practicum advisor. Program administrators quickly reassigned him to another associate, and from that point on Jim notes that he “had no issues with the program, with faculty, staff, or any of the other associate teachers” (Interview, June 2007). “My faculty advisor and practicum director were both helpful, guiding, informative, and self-assuring during the program” (Field notes, June 2007). He felt the experience forced him to seriously question his



ability to nurture and teach children, and he described this episode as “a dark moment” for him personally (Jim, Interview, June 2007).

In spite of this negative episode, Jim still regards his teacher education program positively, although he adds the proviso that he found the allegation episode frustrating and scary; this has left a permanent impression on him. In Jim’s words, “to this day I will not work for that board; I will not even apply for a position at that board” (Interview, June 2007).

When probed as to why he had not availed himself of the judicial system as a way of redressing the allegations he faced, Jim pointed out that he felt that litigation might have impacted on his ability to obtain a license in the province of Ontario.

*George.* George entered the teacher education program with the expectation that he would have a certain amount of freedom in providing creative lessons for students. George spoke glowingly of his first practicum experience, where the associate teacher allowed him some autonomy and gave him the freedom to be creative in his approach to teaching; he thrived in this environment. As a testimonial, the administration received a letter from a student’s parents that was very positive about George’s teaching, and the parents felt that their child had learned a lot.

George encountered some compatibility issues in his second teaching practicum with an associate who appeared to disagree with his teaching style and did not want to relinquish her control of the classroom. “She told me what to do, did not allow me to venture out of her realm, and wanted me to use a very different teaching style. I found her strict, silent, and mean” (Field notes, June 2007). During this practicum George felt that he was continuously being made to conform, was not trusted, and certainly not allowed to

learn from implementing different teaching methods. This left him with a feeling of ineptness and the perception that he was being made to “look like an idiot” (George, Interview, June 2007).

As an example, George was often cut off by his associate in the middle of a lesson that he was presenting. Interestingly, she had previously approved of the lesson. He found that being corrected in front of the children undermined his professionalism, authority, and generally made him look foolish. “There were times when I was made to look like a complete idiot” (Interview, June 2007). “I found her condescending and demeaning, and she treated me as a servant in front of her peers” (George, Questionnaire, January 2007). George felt denigrated in front of what could have been prospective colleagues, and it has left a bitter taste that still rankled at the time of interview.

When asked how he had dealt with this type of behaviour he answered, “I handled this the way most males do. I just sucked it up and kept my mouth shut” (Field notes, June 2007). Adults do not like to be spoken to in a condescending manner. It implies, for them, not only a loss of face but of lowered prestige in a female-dominated environment. He would have much preferred to have had a private discussion on what did and did not work after the lesson. When probed to ascertain how he reacted and dealt with this restrictive structure, he answered that he stuck to doing only what he was asked to do. “I was more than pleased when my time with her was done and really don’t feel like I learned very much” (Field notes, June 2007).

George did recognize that the variety of experiences, with compatible and incompatible associate teachers, had a silver lining. It allowed him to experience a variety of teaching philosophies. “I also found out that there are certain ways that I certainly did

not want to teach, and while I was immersed in the practicum, I actually considered chucking it in if I had to teach in this manner” (George, Interview, June 2007).

Two of the participants, Jim and George, experienced negative situations during their teacher education programs that spoiled what could have otherwise been stellar teaching performances and ratings. The manner in which these 2 participants coped with these situations warrants some attention. Both had difficulties with female associate teachers during practica and chose to withdraw from dealing with their female counterparts. At the time, these participants recognized that they were on track to successfully completing their teacher education programs, and neither of them expressed any desire to pursue the specific events beyond inevitable termination. Simply, Jim and George did not wish to initiate any action that would impact their pending certification. As George stated, “I just pretended I did not hear her comments” (Interview, June 2007), whereas Jim reported, “I just clammed up and kept my mouth shut” (Interview, June 2007).

It appears that these methods were chosen as a form of self-preservation. Each of these participants wanted nothing to stand in the way of achieving successful completion of their ultimate goal of teacher certification. There are dimensions of power at work in using withdrawal as a coping mechanism. As second-career male teacher candidates, these participants found themselves in a minority position, something for which their teacher education programs and previous careers had not prepared them. These participants were in a situation with which they were not used to dealing, and they felt marginalized. They had previously interacted only in male-dominated working environments, and they did not appear to have developed the diplomatic, mediatory, and

personal skills that would have allowed them to cope and function within a predominantly feminine majority.

### **Attitudes of Fellow Teacher Candidates, Friends, Colleagues, and Family**

At times the second-career teacher candidates encountered the expressed attitudes and beliefs of their teacher fellow candidates, family, and friends in a number of individual ways. These attitudes and beliefs influenced each participant's personal career choice differently.

#### *Fellow Teacher Candidates*

For candidates of all ages, beginning a teacher education program can elicit both apprehension and excitement. One of the apprehensions is the prospect of meeting new groups of people and instructors. George viewed the teacher education program as an opportunity to make new friends. Often in George's cohort both second-career males and females would get together and talk about issues and concerns that they had in common. His fellow teacher candidates provided George with positive feedback and confirmation that he could do the work required within his teacher education program. This confidence was perceived by other teacher candidates who would frequently tap into his experience and ask his advice. "I found that in some cases I became a sounding board for younger males" (Interview, June 2007).

This was not the case for Jim, who found that because of the way the program was structured and the size of the group, having the opportunity to collaborate was a rare event. When they did manage to come together, Jim noted that "we had no problem doing group work and that often they [the students] were helpful in getting us to pull together" (Interview, July 2007). Jim did not find that he had the time to spend giving advice to

younger teacher candidates during the program. "I was too busy keeping my own head above water" (Interview, June 2007).

Robert reported that during his program he received a fair amount of respect from fellow teacher candidates based on his maturity and previous profession. For Robert, this was an epiphany of sorts. "The magnitude of the decision [to become a teacher] became more apparent the more people I met and [the more times that I] explained about my background" (Questionnaire, February 2007). Although he did not enjoy the process of group work, he did work collegially with his fellow teacher candidates. When Robert was faced with conflicting issues that arose between other students and himself, he replied that he made it a point to "go with the flow" (Interview, June 2007).

### *Friends and Colleagues*

The attitudes of friends, former colleagues, and other acquaintances were important to these second-career male teacher candidates. For Robert, the opinions of some of his former colleagues were the catalyst that led him to consider teaching as a career option. "They pointed out that I had the ability to explain technical concepts to people in a clear manner" (Questionnaire, February 2007). Robert laboured over the question of what his friends and associates would think if he were to make a career change. At times, he received a number of mixed messages. The friends that were quite close were supportive. "They encouraged me, and I got a lot of personal reinforcement from friends" (Robert, Interview, March 2007). A lot of Robert's friends gave him credit for the magnitude of the change that he made in his life.

But Robert also experienced some pessimism concerning his motivations and decision to make a career change. "There were always the ones that figured that I was in

it for the holidays; these were the cynical ones. Some friends hassled me with teacher jokes and about the summers off kind of thing” (Robert, Interview and Field notes, June 2007). “There were even some [friends] that thought that I was nuts for wanting to change careers” (Robert, Interview, July 2007). Robert observed these friends had difficulty understanding how he could leave a secure position to incur the risks that a career change would necessitate. He suggested that there was even a certain amount of envy in some people.

A similar sentiment was echoed by Jim. His work associates thought he was crazy for wanting to change careers at his age:

There were 20 of us in a consulting firm. Some of them I stayed in touch with, and they were surprised at what I was doing. . . . One of them was extremely supportive and said that she could see me as a teacher. She saw that I was quite capable of being able to do this type of change. . . . There were some that just said, “Oh, that’s nice,” so I can’t be sure of what their reaction really was (Jim, Interview, June 2007). Most were generally supportive; they saw that it was something that I really wanted to do. (Questionnaire, April 2007)

But despite this support from some individuals in Jim’s life, Jim also had some individuals that were detractors:

About one half of my friends were not supportive of me making a change; however, of the ones who were supportive, they were overwhelmingly so. Some thought I was nuts for wanting to change careers. (Interview, June 2007)

Those that thought he was crazy for wanting to change careers were from his former profession.

George had little chance to gauge the reactions of all of his fellow work colleagues. He had suffered a debilitating vehicular accident that forced him to spend approximately a year away from his workplace. It was during this period that he put into action his plans for a career change. Of those coworkers that he kept in close contact with, “personal [workplace] friends thought that this was a great move for me and encouraged me. I also got a lot of personal reinforcement from good friends” (Interview, June 2007).

### *Family*

Perhaps the attitudes that were the most important to the second-career males were those of their immediate family members and direct relations. “My wife was supportive; she didn’t flinch for a minute as far as how it was going to affect us” (Robert, Interview, March 2007). The rest of his family he described as being generally supportive. This general support he attributed to having several members of his extended family who were teachers and who encouraged him towards teaching as a career. Yet, Robert did meet with some resistance within his immediate family, specifically from his children: “They thought that I had gone over to the dark side” (Interview, June 2007).

For Jim, the family member who was most supportive turned out to be an aunt. “It was something that she could see me doing. She could visualize that” (Jim, Interview, July 2007). His ex-wife was least supportive, as she expressed fears about Jim not working during his program. She was concerned about the lag of time to be hired on full time by a school board. “The ex was not very supportive because it meant I was not going to be working. And that was my decision not to work” (Jim, Interview, July 2007).

George also had attitudinal resistance from family members. He noted that his wife was generally supportive, although she was very concerned about the pay cut that would be incurred given the fact that they had a new baby (Interview, June 2007). Further, his parents expressed disappointment about his choice of teaching as a future profession, and they openly expressed concerns about the poor pay. George's parents were first-generation Canadian immigrants from a Mediterranean background who, according to George, did not understand that it is currently common for a man to have a number of occupational changes during his lifetime.

### **Teacher Induction**

Commenting on their personal transitions to teaching, the participants expressed a number of views describing how they presently felt about their transition from one career to another. All participants were emphatic about their satisfaction in their current teaching careers, although 2 of the participants expressed ambiguity as to the prudence of their original decision.

When asked to reflect on his personal journey into the teaching profession, Robert described it in this fashion: "Thinking back, had I known everything about what I was getting into I wouldn't have made the move" (Questionnaire, February 2007). Robert contends that even though he feels he had a relatively easy time with the transition, it was a spur-of-the-moment decision. "You could call it a midlife crisis, and normally I analyze things to death. But this time it just seemed the right thing to do" (Correspondence, July 2007).

The rewards of becoming a teacher for Robert and the other participants in this study were influenced heavily by what they perceived to be an enhanced quality of



meaningful work. Robert stated that during his practica he relied heavily on many of the skills he had acquired in his previous work-related situations. He noted his acquired interpersonal skills, his organizational abilities, and his ability to prioritize tasks were some of these important skills. "There has been even more of a link to my professional skills now that I am teaching" (Interview, June 2007).

In George's case, it was difficult for him to separate his lived experience from his teaching experience, especially because this is what he believed was a positive attribute that he brought to the classroom:

Lived experience told me that children wanted their learning experiences to be fun—something that seems so simplistic but very difficult to achieve. . . . The concepts and strategies that I gained from my business career, I find can be applied to adults and children equally. (Interview, March 2007)

Fatherhood and being an older male certainly gives one more of an appreciation of the students. (Field notes, June 2007)

I bring [to teaching] skills like organizational abilities, writing and speaking skills, each drawn from my previous career. (Interview, June 2007)

George utilizes many of the skills that he developed in his previous career to complement his teaching methods. When asked what he considered to be the most important skill that he is currently using in his current teaching position, George answered that it derives from his experience as a former supervisor. "I realized the importance of positive reinforcement and the use of techniques that can get people to do things that they don't want to do" (Interview, March 2007). George stated that had he had the opportunity he would have transitioned much sooner (Field notes, June 2007)

“Teaching is something I have always been drawn to” (Jim, Questionnaire, April 2007). It was part and parcel of the job description in his previous career, and Jim wanted to continue utilizing these skills that he had worked so hard to attain. For Jim, the success and validation of his teaching career were measured in many ways. “My first practicum confirmed for me that children enjoy me as their teacher and warm up to me in a short time” (Field notes, June 2007). It was this thought that carried him through the negative experiences of his second practicum, where he had begun to seriously question his ability to nurture and teach children.

Jim now finds that he brings a lot of experience to the classroom, such as the knowledge he gained from extensive travel throughout Canada. This lived experience is seldom something that a first-career teacher can offer prospective students. It has greatly helped him understand children that are in transition, being uprooted from one sociocommunity to another. Based on his prior work experiences, Jim believes that he can better understand the difficulties of ESL children and how some of them undergo constant social upheaval. “My work experiences have also helped me with organizational skills, dealing with difficult situations, and being flexible when dealing with people” (Interview, June 2007).

Jim was hesitant in responding to questions about his transition process and whether he would do it again. The difficulties that he had encountered in his one practicum negatively impacted him, and he indicated that he was ambivalent about his original decision (Interview, June 2007).

For these second-career teacher candidates, the career transition into teaching was not a series of random events but rather well-articulated responses to something that was

missing or had faded from their previous professional careers. These study participants brought to the teaching profession knowledge, professional acumen, and lived experience that first-career teacher candidates may not have yet acquired. They articulated this professionalism by pointing out that in their current practices they often defer and extend to the knowledge and experience accumulated in their prior careers. George put it best when he stated, “I think that we are a lot more caring and loving, as teachers, than many who have been doing it a long time. We have better life experiences than first-career teachers and are not as jaded as long-timers” (Interviews, March and June 2007).

### **Summary**

This research study gathered the views and perspectives of 3 second-career teachers concerning issues that they encountered in pursuing their teacher education programs. The following is a summary of the five themes that resulted from an analysis of the data.

Study participants reported a number of motivations for their transition to teaching, such as wanting to work with young people, desiring an increased sense of personal achievement, and seeking job satisfaction. These motivations have been documented in previous literature. As well, participants articulated other personal motivating factors such as needing more time for family commitments, craving a more flexible lifestyle, yearning to teach a subject for which they felt they had a passion, and sharing their personal life histories and experiences. It became clear that these participants had constructed images and roles as teachers prior to their program recruitment. Each had incurred a significant midlife event which allowed sufficient time

to reflect and plan their career change. By far, the single most dominant factor articulated by these participants for transition was their desire to change the nature of their work.

Like other teacher candidates, despite preplanning, the participants incurred financial challenges during and after their programs. In some cases this caused worry and family uncertainty, which were viewed as a major financial concern. Participants unanimously found the program recruitment processes inconsistent and frustrating. All 3 participants were technologically competent, yet they found program information sites convoluted and frustrating to negotiate.

The participants in this study saw content relevance and delivery methodologies as problematic in their program curriculum. Candidates expected that they would be taught by instructors who were up to date and in tune with the modern realities of teaching. They expressed disappointment when this did not occur. The use of group work strategies, in this demographic, was negatively interpreted. Second-career candidates tended to withdraw from this process by opting out or letting others delegate the tasks and timelines. This collegial group work strategy did not appear to work well with adult learners who are used to working independently and setting their own timelines.

Each of the second-career candidates in this study had a negative program experience which occurred in the teaching practica section of their programs. In two cases these negative experiences were sufficient enough that candidates considered withdrawing from their respective programs.

For at least one study participant, the opinions of colleagues provided the catalyst for his teaching candidature. All participants indicated a high level of positive personal reinforcement from colleagues and friends. Once accepted into their programs, these

second-career students found that they were frequently consulted by other program candidates because of their former work and life experiences.

Two participants experienced bantering as well as pessimism from previous colleagues, friends, and family. Family attitudes were the most significant for this group. These attitudes ranged from being totally supportive to abject resistance. Two of the candidates felt supported by their spouses and family, while one candidate encountered a lack of support. Resistance was mostly attributed to the loss of financial security during the teacher education programs. Overall, negativity was not strong enough to deter the candidates from their new career choices.

These study participants reported mixed feelings concerning their career transitions. One candidate was adamant that if he had it to do over again he would not have gone into the teaching profession, in spite of having had a relatively easy time with the transition process. Another considered that given the opportunity, he would have undertaken the process at a much younger age. The third participant in this study reported that though he enjoyed teaching and being with his students, he was not sure if he would want to undergo the process again in light of the negative experiences he had in his teaching practica.

## CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

“Experience is therefore the starting point and the key term for all social inquiry” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, Prologue, p. xxiii).

The challenge of case study is to explain the phenomenon under examination in terms of its possible meanings, arriving at an understanding of the experience (Merriam, 1998). This case study of 3 second-career teachers was undertaken as an inquiry to understand their career change experiences. The experiences that second-career teacher candidates incur in their pursuit of certification are different from those incurred by first-career candidates. Often, the former individuals bring unique dual allegiances to teacher education programs based on their familial responsibilities. By contrast, first-career teacher candidates rarely have these obligations. As well, second-career candidates bring with them to teacher education programs professionalism, knowledge, and commitment that they have previously acquired through worked and lived experience—this has not yet been developed in first-career applicants (Freidus & Krasnow, 1991). Crow et al. (1990) inform us that career changers already have acquired a repertoire that they use to “adapt and respond to the constraints of different occupations,” and this sets them apart from younger candidates (p. 200). They add that second-career candidates often realize that their first careers were chosen with “little deliberation” and that there had never been a conscious decision (p. 207).

Second-career teacher candidates, when transitioning, are in the process of recreating aspects of their professional lives and changing the nature of their work by making it more personally meaningful and rewarding (Bennett, 1988; Crow et al., 1990; Freidus, 1992; McNay 2001; Milloy, 2003). Freidus (1994) informs us that second-career

candidates in general “are motivated to take on a new image of self” (p. 4). It is not possible for first-career candidates to identify with these concerns if they have not been through the process of lived and worked experience.

First-career teacher candidates view their teacher education programs as a foundation and entry point into the profession. They see their programs as preparatory and instrumental structures that assist them to secure certification for employment as teachers. First-career applicants approach teacher education programs as structures that are meant to provide formative strategies for them to be successful as teachers in the classroom (Doyle & Carter, 2003). Most second-career teacher candidates see their teacher education programs as a facilitation of their desire to be of service or to give something back as teachers in the community (McNay, 2001; Milloy, 2003).

The current study of how 3 second-career males transitioned from a previous profession to teaching also examined their social, psychological, and professional self-reconstruction as a part of the transition process. The findings of the current study suggest that these participants did not appear to be influenced heavily by their past experiences. They did not view themselves as a “conserving force that would lead to the reproduction of traditional classroom practices” (Jenne, 1996, p. 18). Rather, the participants believed that they entered teacher education because all the experiences that they acquired in their previous careers had led them to this point in their lives. They longed for a change from their past institutional careers and desired experiences that they considered were more concrete and held real value. They hoped to pass on to students the accumulated knowledge of their collected experiences in ways that they considered important, new, novel, and fun.

Previous career experiences help second-career teacher candidates create their roles as teachers (Jenne, 1996). This was true for the participants in this study; however, this does not suggest that they were conservatively entrenched and less amenable to change than first-career teacher candidates. Candidates in this study were asked to identify the factors that enabled their transition and to share this knowledge for the benefit of future second-career teacher candidates. This is another aspect that separates first-career teacher candidates from second-career teacher candidates. The latter have made a deliberate and vested occupational decision to change careers, which is not always the case with first-career candidates who are often just beginning the process of defining their career aspirations. As such, second-career candidates demonstrate a greater degree of occupational control and choice than first-career candidates. Novak and Knowles (1992) state that the personal and professional lives of second-career teachers “play a powerful part in the development of their teaching practices” (p. 31).

The differences that exist between first- and second-career teacher applicants are primarily associated with differences in life stage, experience, familial status and obligations, motivations, and career aspirations. A significant difference is that second-career candidates appear to need to have their personal and prior professional experiences validated and valued through enriched program contexts and associated curriculum and practicum experiences. Many second-career candidates need to be paired with associate teachers who have sensitivity and consideration for their dual allegiances to school and family. Novak and Knowles (1992) add that there are distinctions between “those individuals who choose teaching as an initial career and those who are drawn to it as a second-career” (p. 35). As one of the participants indicated, second-career teachers are



unique: They are not as inexperienced as novice candidates, yet they are not as seasoned as teachers who have been in the profession for many years. Their approach to teaching appears a little more pragmatic than first-career candidates, and they are not as jaded as some that have been in the profession a long period.

Last, second-career teacher candidates do not come to teaching empty-handed. They bring with them concrete skills honed in other professions and are remarkably adaptable to teaching and learning. First-career candidates rarely bring such skills to teaching. Participants in this study arrived at teaching with experiences in architecture, business accounting, and engineering. These primary professional skills were augmented by a subset of other attributes such as the ability to motivate and delegate as well as personal relation skills that had been learned and developed during their extensive business careers.

### **Summary of the Study**

This research was an extension of a pilot study designed to gain an understanding of the issues faced by second-career males who enter teaching. Informed by my experience, I was interested in how other second-career candidates transitioned from first careers to pursue teacher education degrees. The participants in the current research were 3 Caucasian male teachers working in Ontario who had successfully transitioned from productive professional first careers into teaching. All of the teacher education programs attended by the participants in this study were specifically oriented to the training of teachers to meet the requirements of the Ontario College of Teachers for certification. Two of their institutions were located in Ontario, Canada, while one institution was located in the United States. This study examined the perceptions, beliefs, and personal

accounts of this small homogeneous group. Of particular interest were their impressions of the course delivery that was used to prepare them to become teachers.

This case study used data collected through an email questionnaire, 2 one-on-one semistructured audiotaped interviews, researcher's field notes, and journal reflections. The data were then coded, analyzed for emerging trends, collated, and compared. The results were presented as a series of findings that will be of interest to teacher educators, school boards, teacher federations, and second-career adults that have an interest in transitioning into teaching.

### *Motivations Drawing Second-Career Males to Teaching*

The findings suggest that many of the motives articulated by the participants were consistent with those found in existing literature. When reflecting on why they went into teaching, second-career teacher candidates spoke of a number of extrinsic "socioeconomic" reasons and intrinsic "self-fulfillment" motives that have been well documented in the literature (e.g., Serow & Forrest, 1994). Each participant in this study expressed a desire to work with children (Bradley, 2000; Coulter & McNay, 1993; Serow & Forrest) and to mentor them in some way (Berliner, 2004; Jamieson, 2005; Milloy, 2003). Moreover, the second-career candidates in this study felt the need to meaningfully serve the community at large (Chambers & Roper, 2000; McNay, 2001; Milloy). In particular, it has been documented (Bradley; Chambers & Roper; McNay; Milloy) that for those who entertain a career transition, personal gratification is a large factor in their decisions. Second-career adult candidates in this study expressed a consistent need to share what they have learned with others. This need was often expressed as an offer to their community and to society as teachers.

However, the most powerful extrinsic motivation to teach suggested by the participants in this study was that each wanted to change the meaning of his work. Participants in this study expressed dissatisfaction with what was valued in their first careers. These prior careers no longer held the fiscal or status attraction they once did. Freidus (1992) has described career changers as individuals who desire something more challenging, such as an opportunity to do something else that would add “greater meaning to their lives and the lives of others because they find something missing in their world of work” (p. 3). O’Connor (1995) has theorized that adults, who are subjected to tremendous social pressure to fulfill their roles as family breadwinners, may in their midlife begin to question their prior career choices. The participants in this study expressed concerns over their familial obligations but still chose to leave financially lucrative positions in order to seek more personally rewarding careers. They incurred risk to personal and family stability to pursue a career and profession that was more service oriented. As one of the participants stated, he wanted to change the view, not just the scenery. The participants confirmed the assertions made by Crow et al. (1990) in their ethnographic study that “the determining factors of career change had been extended beyond organizational determinants” (p. 199). Such attitudes and changes have been recognized in lifespan developmental theory suggesting that midlife (for adults) is an important stage where they typically reevaluate major areas in their lives such as career and work (Brandenburgh & Lushington, 2007; Cross, 1981).

The participants in this study articulated a desire to change the meaning of their work, and they confirmed that midlife, for them, was a time of intense personal reflection, centering on altruistic motives to mentor young people. Within this group of

participants, the desire to change the meaning of their work was a significant contradiction to the findings of Serow and Forrest (1994) that “discovered no single force or factor – other than the appeal of teaching itself” (p. 560) in their study of second-career teacher candidates. One of the participants recognized and elaborated that for him the transition repudiated the values and rewards offered by the competitive nature of his existing workplace, a notion previously alluded to by Serow and Forrest.

None of the participants in this study expressed any concern about exchanging one competitive workplace for another. Their altruism during this midlife transition process appeared to have deafened them to the realities of job competition in the modern Ontario teacher marketplace. In a similar vein, teaching in Ontario is rife with an unwritten curriculum of competitive values. The implicit teaching of children to compete for marks (Hargreaves et al., 2002; Lachowsky, 2006, Noble, 2007), the provincial emphasis on assessment rankings, the legislative demand for teachers to be held accountable (Glassford, 2005; OCT, 1996), the comparison of students to standardized norms (Simner, 2000), and the socialization by gender and ability are part and parcel of a contemporary teacher’s role. Yet none of the second-career teacher candidates expressed discomfort in replacing the values of one institutional bureaucracy with the values of another socially conservative institution.

None of the participants expressed concern about their ability to secure employment once their teacher education programs were complete. It would appear that the competitiveness of the education market did not concern them. The shift, expressed in this study by all of the participants, is a turning away from an extrinsic, profit-driven,

secure career towards what they considered was a more intrinsic value-laden, service-oriented career.

The second-career participants in this study looked back on their experiences and remembered concerns with the lack of family income incurred during the time they were in their programs. Because of their commitments as breadwinners, caregivers, and fathers, the participants demonstrated similar concerns over issues previously documented in the literature (Brember et al., 2002; Chambers & Roper, 2000; Milloy, 2003). Two of the participants in this study had accumulated enough debt that would necessitate several years of teaching before they would return to financial solvency. In the case of one participant, debt was seen as an investment that would eventually provide a measure of future security for himself and his family. He came into a small inheritance that compensated for the loss of income. He felt that a modest debt was a small price to pay for the future stability he would attain once he became gainfully employed as a teacher. As such, all 3 participants accepted a certain amount of financial risk.

Based on the experiences of these 3 second-career teacher candidates, the findings may also suggest that older teacher candidates are inadequately prepared by their teacher education programs to assume teaching positions in primarily female-dominated domains. Males that have worked for long periods of time in male-dominated arenas may find themselves marginalized when dealing with issues in female-dominated workplaces. They may cope with problems that arise in their programs by either quietly accepting and withdrawing or by reverting to traditional images and practices of masculinity such as being overly competitive or authoritarian. Sargent (2001) has suggested that outward expressions could be deceptive, as they may represent only a lack of vocabulary for



second-career male transitioning to teaching should presume automatic hiring over female candidates who are equally qualified.

The participants in this study were unanimous in their desire to change the nature of their work. All articulated a desire to want to move away from links with the corporate ethic of their first careers towards one they believed to be more service oriented. Yet none of these first-career professional candidates identified their use of gender redress initiatives as a means that would give them a competitive edge over feminine counterparts, a tool often used and associated with the competitiveness found in male-dominated business enterprises. Drudy et al. (2005) have expressed that such attitudes in conjunction with a stronger demand for teacher accountability in modern education could indicate a renewed process of remasculinization in education. The unanimity of their desire to change the nature of their first career work, expressed by these 3 second career teacher candidates, presents an area needing further examination outside the scope of this study. Specifically, an examination of previous work contexts and elements impacting directly on transitional decisions could suggest a number of variables yet to be explored.

#### *Instructional Methodologies, Associate Teachers, and Peer Interactions*

Though it may not be unique solely to this specific demographic of teacher candidates, the second-career participants in this study found the university instructional processes both frustrating and confusing. Certain aspects of their coursework were chaotic and appeared to have no relevance. This was specifically true when classes were facilitated by instructors who had been quickly hired and thrown into an incoherent teacher education program. As well, facilitators who had been away from teaching for a

number of years were found to be teaching methods which were out of date and out of touch with modern realities.

The majority of the negative experiences the participants encountered in their individual programs occurred in their practice teaching sessions. Each participant experienced some discord in one or more of their teaching practica. Two of the study participants entertained leaving the program due to their practicum experiences, and one of the participants experienced a feeling of ineptitude and isolation from his fellow staff members fuelled by their negative attitudes towards the profession. Only through the timely and sensitive intervention of practica supervisors were these candidates encouraged to continue and eventually succeed in acquiring their certification and becoming teachers.

When the participants were asked about how they interacted with their peers, they responded that they usually just allowed others to make decisions for them. One of the participants added that he had little time to waste during his chaotic and busy program, so he just acquiesced and let his peer teacher candidates do what they wanted. These responses suggest how these 3 second-career candidates safely mitigated their uncertainty concerning how to act when confronted with a dynamic for which they had no previous experience or training. The use of quiet, tacit, general acceptance by the 3 adult male participants who found themselves working in female-dominant professions could indicate male gendered discomfort when dealing with issues that arise outside the parameters of male-dominant frameworks. However, given the limitations of case study research, other generalizations such as authoritative resistance, specific social and gendered contexts, or demonstrating collegial conformity could also explain their tacit



behaviour, but cannot be confirmed in this research study. Within the body of literature on adult learning, there is the notion that adult learners have defined goals and view processes that slow their learning and achievement as a waste of their time and energy. Thompson (1985) has suggested that adult learners appear to resist learning situations where they believe there is some form of attack on their competencies. "They tend to reject prescriptives by others for their learning" (Thompson, p. 17).

Two of the participants pointed out that because of their previous work experiences they found that younger teacher candidates accorded them at times more respect than their associate teachers. Their help was frequently sought by younger first-career candidates to cope with organizational as well as personal concerns which arose from program problems. One participant added that, at times, during his teaching practices he found himself in the middle of contentious political issues which made him feel uncomfortable. His discomfort arose from being placed in the position of arbiter between first-career candidates, their peers, teaching associates, and program administrative staff. As a result he made it a general rule to spend as little time as possible in staff rooms and other common areas during his practica. As a teacher candidate it is possible that he was reluctant to participate in discussions on controversial political issues. The drive and motivations to obtain certification could have placed restrictive social and professional boundaries prohibiting this candidate from freely expressing his thoughts on certain important issues. This could have been selective reconstruction on the part of this teacher candidate.

All 3 participants expressed that as teacher candidates they knew that they would be entering a professional training program where they would be in the gender and age

minority. Two of the candidates commented that because they were men they would have liked to have seen more male associate teachers and faculty as a part of their teacher education program. They voiced their concern that the teacher education program did little to help them integrate into a career area dominated by females. They further expressed that they would have enjoyed teaming up with more male associates and would have tapped into and shared their experiences about being a male in a female-dominated profession. Although they had been warned by their teacher educators about what to watch out for in terms of avoiding potential allegations of sexual harassment, they did not have the opportunity to have these conversations with practicing male teachers.

Another participant noted that he did not feel included, as his classes were female oriented. He felt that the tone of the instructors and instruction methods they used to convey information to the group left him collegially isolated. He found not only the camaraderie and banter slanted, but instructors' illustrations were not relevant to the male teacher candidates. Sargent (2001) acknowledges that traditionally teacher education programs are geared towards women and their "supposed history of having connections to children causing many men to feel like interlopers" (p. 116). Case study utilizes what Stake (1995) has called "thick description" (p. 10). The descriptions offered by this participant could have been coloured by the extreme nature of his experiences in his practica and the motivations for this selected memory may lie in personal bias developed as a result of his experiences. We are reminded that in this case study, details are also retrospective in nature, and subject to memory recall and selective reconstruction.

As teacher candidates, 2 of the 3 study participants stated that they found communication and interaction with their associate teachers difficult and stressful—this is

not inconsistent with findings reported by Freidus (1992). One candidate described his teacher education practicum as an exercise in being demeaned. Freidus (1994) has suggested that some co-operating teachers may believe that age and prior career experiences “may exempt this demographic from a novice standing” (p. 4). Furthermore, “some associate teachers may find the motivations of second-career candidates’ suspect and “may use the demands of teaching itself as reasons not to provide the necessary support and resources that are required” (p. 4).

The findings from these participants indicate that much is still required by faculties of education to ensure compatibility between second-career teacher candidates and their associates. Associates paired with second-career candidates may not be adequately prepared by the program providers to receive and work with such candidates. A more judiciously vetted program for associates seems to be required as well as better preparation and understanding of issues specific to second-career teacher candidates.

#### *How the Study Participants Viewed Their Transition Journey to Teaching*

Participants agreed that second-career teacher candidates would prefer a quick launch into their teacher education program and ultimately into their chosen new career. This could be achieved through some form of prior learning assessment or through an application process in which an increased measure of weight is placed on prior work and lived experience, allowing them to enter practica work more quickly. Participants were unified and consistent in their aspirations to complete their teacher education programs successfully and begin to work as teachers as quickly as possible. This would refute Thornton’s (2003) assertion suggesting that men instinctively understand that even the teaching profession is a competitive marketplace. The adult males in this study indicated

that they thought that they would complete their programs and be hired quickly as part of an overall provincial gender redressing that was articulated in the province of Ontario. Candidates considered that they already had one foot inside the door by virtue of their gender. The current research suggests that the second-career candidates in this study appear to have a heightened economic concern, motivating their desire to be hired as quickly as possible.

At least one participant in this study stated that he would think long and hard about doing his teacher education program again. This was in contrast to another participant who stated that he would willingly do it over again in spite of his negative practicum experiences, only he would do it sooner rather than later in his adult life. The third participant was noncommittal and was not sure if he would ever undertake such a program again in the light of the emotional and financial costs.

### **Discussion**

An examination of the transferable skills each of the participants had previously acquired in his first career is worthy of discussion. All 3 career change participants stated that, from their first careers, they brought leadership and management skills to teaching. In particular, 2 participants mentioned that they had mentored colleagues into various administrative organizational positions. George pointed out that many of the concepts and strategies used in business applications can be applied to both adults and children equally. They all had acquired proven personal relationship skills which they often found were powerful tools in helping them manage a classroom of students. As well, they had all acquired the ability to relate to people, an invaluable skill in dealing with students, parents, colleagues, and administration. Two of the study participants (George and

Robert) mentioned they brought organizational and communication skills to the profession.

All of these individuals had acquired and highly developed a familiarity with modern technology. Jim had concrete applicable expertise situated in accounting technology, whereas Robert had solid credentials in engineering technology and math. George brought with his candidacy an extensive experiential background in architecture and organizational behaviour. These skills have obvious discernable applications in teaching and learning that are sought after by school boards as well as students. School boards acquire staffs that are more than eminently qualified to teach direct and related subject matter, whereas students benefit from the hands-on work-related first-career experience these candidates bring to the classroom.

Finally, each of the participants in this study was a father or had previously raised children. In at least one case the desire to nurture children became the primary motivation behind career change. Parenting may be a valuable experience for teachers. It provides opportunities to develop nurturing skills and may help in understanding student development in practical real-life experiential contexts. This experience is valuable to teachers when dealing with students on a day-to-day basis. The skills that are developed through parenting are usually yet to be attained by first-career candidates.

Indeed, authentic teaching experience with children is highly desirable as an application requirement. The findings suggest that some form of prior learning and skill assessment would be a benefit for qualifying second-career candidates with sufficient theoretical and experiential backgrounds. Such assessments would allow them to integrate more quickly into the practical requirements of teaching. Then allowing second-

career teacher candidates to participate in concrete and practical teaching practica on a timely basis would help affirm that their years of experience are valued. This would be consistent with aspects of adult learning principles as outlined by Knowles (1980). Indeed, an imperative tenet of andragogy is the recognition that adults learn best when their prior experiences are affirmed and built upon (Caffarella, 1994; Kilgore, 2001).

In spite of their life and work experience, second-career applicants often enter teacher education programs and face a number of institutionally imposed challenges. This case study indicated that there were a number of areas that could ease the transition to teaching for second-career candidates. One such area would be to streamline the institutional recruitment processes. The present study confirmed data found by Hendricken (2002) that suggests that second-career adults returning to university graduate programs find recruiting processes intimidating and confusing.

At present, teacher education programs tend to adopt a “one-size-fits-all” approach. Structured “one-size-fits-all” education for teacher candidates may suit the needs of the university and their bureaucratic and fiscal requirements, but it does little to serve the unique requirements of second-career teacher candidates. Pedagogy, according to Brookfield (1990) and Dewey (1938), as well as andragogy alluded to by Knowles (1974) suggests that learning should begin from where the student is positioned, not from where the institution requires him to be positioned. Little tangible consideration is accorded in teacher education programs to previous career competencies, accumulated professionalism, or life skills.

For second-career teacher candidates, relevance of course materials and institutional approaches in teacher education is imperative. During course delivery, there

needs to be an association with prior knowledge through lived and work experience.

Teacher educators should consider alternative ways to acknowledge the mature experience that second-career students bring to the teacher education classroom on a daily basis. As McNay (2001) states,

studies of the special contributions second-career teachers make to the profession and how they fare on the job might assist in recruitment, program and course planning, and the design of both induction and professional development programs for these teachers. (p. 145)

Of specific concern is how these participants appeared to be influenced by the media. Such information maligning the custodial nature of teaching, and in general stereotyping males as less nurturing than females, affected the study participants by causing them to question their career choices. Additionally, widespread societal views held that teaching is a nontraditional occupation for second-career males, with little prestige and a high incidence of burnout. In a contradictory fashion, study participants stated that they received messages and information that appeared to outline provincial goals to encourage more adult males to enter teaching as part of a gender rebalancing initiative. In particular, popular media and Ministry of Education sources extolled the need to have more adult males in the teaching profession to serve as role models and mentors. Participants interpreted these messages as a call to teaching because of a lack of specific representation within the profession. Information concerning the need for greater adult male representation was interpreted by these candidates as an employment niche that would allow them to be hired expediently upon completion of their programs. Drudy et al. (2005) have made the argument, with some justification, that there are some who

consider such attitudes as attempts to remasculinize the profession through gender initiatives that appear more corporate in outline and have no basis in educational justification on students to date. These messages from the media did little to integrate these second-career teacher candidates into teaching.

Findings in this case study suggest that many of the institutional challenges faced by second-career applicants are similar with those faced by first-career candidates. What separates the two is lived and worked experience. Second-career candidates because of their experiences are more critical of mediocre instruction and less tolerant of bureaucratic contingencies. They have developed certain expectations and understandings of what good education is comprised of and looks like. Because of the risk factors involved to themselves and their families they appear to be less accepting of what they consider to be substandard educational and institutional practices.

### **Implications**

A major step in enticing more second-career adults into the profession is to have the stakeholders (e.g., Ontario Ministry of Education, Ontario school boards, and The Ontario College of Teachers) define and implement consistent expectations for teachers. *The Standards of Practice*, delineated by the Ontario College of Teachers, outline a code of conduct and ethics that teachers and teacher candidates are expected to maintain and uphold. However, teachers receive contradictory messages from other stakeholders such as provincial entities, school boards, and other locally concerned social and parental groups. For example, provincial legislation regarding student testing suggests to teachers that there is a tremendous gulf between the provincial perception of what teaching should be in actuality and the reality of the profession on a day-by-day basis. Potential second-



career candidates, because of these inconsistencies, feel pulled in several directions and confused by such discordant messages. Another example is cited in the need to remunerate teachers adequately for the work that they do with students and in particular implement wage scales for new teachers that are more in line with the existing social realities (Milloy, 2003; Mills et al., 2004; Paton, 2004). This would not only underscore the importance of the profession of teaching but would send a message from the province to all prospective teacher candidates that educators are highly valued. Such a message would imply to potential second-career candidates a more inviting and value-laden attitude towards working with young children (Jones, 2003) and lower the inconsistencies applicants face when considering education as a possible career.

A further example would be to promote, constructively and actively, the image of adult males as teachers working with young children (Fergusen, 2005; Jamieson, 2005; Mills et al., 2004). This would mitigate many of the negative public images of males in teaching and alleviate the social stigma attached to males working with children. The implementation of a promotional policy that is politically driven and views teaching as a profession worthy of being pursued would slowly change the image that appears to be prevalent today (Milloy, 2003; Paton, 2004). The image of a teacher should conjure a label of nobility such that second-career teacher candidates can once again see it as a vocation for which to strive as well as a profession of importance and status (Hill, 1996; McNay, 2001).

To begin to address many of the issues described would necessitate greater political direction and will than is currently being exhibited. It would require a synthesis between the public perception of teaching and the reality of teaching. What is required is

a promotional attitude that can counter the common negative social perceptions of the profession. The ministries and departments of education, school boards, teacher licensure bodies, and degree-granting institutions could implement policies and programs aimed at encouraging candidates of all ages into the educative process.

Fergusen (2005) and Fratt (2004) suggest a number of short- and long-term initiatives that could be used to entice adult males into the teaching profession. First, it is essential to promote teaching as a viable career choice for boys in high school. This marked and pronounced marketing strategy could include the promotion of teaching on career days and at career forums (Fergusen; Jamieson, 2005). School boards could increase their networking with community-based organizations, educating these groups about the important roles that second-career candidates can play within the schools. They could seek out teachers involved and active within paraeducation services, such as community learning centers, and encourage this untapped resource sector to enter the profession (Serow & Forrest, 1994).

Another initiative could include facilitation by provincial and federal governments of academic grants and low-interest loans for potential candidates in other careers to transition to teaching. Universities could do their share by upgrading course structures and should consider alternate certification programs better suited to adult learning processes such as mentoring, job shadowing, or part-time studies (Crow et al., 1990; Milloy, 2003; Serow & Forrest, 1994). Prospective late-entry teachers could have more flexibility to choose alternative certification programs, knowing that their lived and worked experience may be taken into consideration through some form of prior learning

assessment and that their coursework and practice teaching sessions are aligned to their andragogical learning requirements.

### *Implications for Practice*

In the province of Ontario, there has been an expressed focus to address the gender imbalance that is perceived to exist within the teaching profession by organizations such as the Elementary Teachers Federation of Ontario. As such, it was important for this current study to seek to understand the wide range of reasons why second-career adults are motivated to pursue teaching as a viable profession. Some reasons to pursue teaching are not as straightforward for second-career adults as they appear to be for first-career applicants. Though there may be a core of motivations that are common to both first- and second-career teacher candidates, there are other motivations that second-career adults consider during their decision-making process. Changing the nature of their work from a corporate ethic to one that is more service oriented is an example of one of these motivations. Yet, despite the desire to pursue more meaningful work, the recruitment and retention of second-career candidates is difficult in light of obvious fiscal attractions and alternatives available to them in other business and commercial sectors. The researcher maintains that recruitment and retention of a second-career demographic could be enhanced by understanding and capitalizing on the motivations and values that attract such second-career candidates to teaching.

Several of the participants spoke of the teacher education instructors' lack of academic relevance because they had been away from the realities of teaching children in the classroom. This is a complaint often voiced by first-career applicants concerning their teacher education programs. In order to keep their knowledge and information current,

teacher educators should entertain a policy of returning to the field every 2 or 3 years as part of a normal rotation in their teaching assignments. This would provide a fresh teaching perspective as well as ensure that teacher candidates are being taught and mentored by practitioners using current methodologies and strategies that are in touch with existing realities.

There is a need in teacher education programs to consider more closely the developed competencies that second-career candidates bring with them. Dewey (1938) indicated that the problem of traditional education was not in its content or curriculum but rather resides in its inability to recognize the importance of the learner and equate the significance of the learning environment to the learning process. Freidus (1994) indicates that adults learn best

when there is acknowledgement of and respect for what they know and who they are; where they can use what they know as a basis for building new insights, and are allowed to become partners in the dialogue of their learning. This needs to be born in mind in the design of programs of supervision and the construction of individual teacher/supervisory relationships. (p. 11)

A case could be made against the use of a formative approach to teacher education for second-career candidates as it currently exists in teacher education programs. This would imply a need to structure programs and courses differently from what is currently being offered. "Implications for teacher education include the need to develop programs which promote ways to assist career changers use their previous life and career experiences to enhance classroom teaching" (Novak & Knowles, 1992, p. 33). One such approach could center on the greater use of autobiographical interviews

coupled with a higher programmed weight for prior learning experience for second-career candidates. The findings of this study might be considered in admissions criteria that suggest points be awarded for previous experience. The potential for program streaming for second-career teacher candidates that meet experiential standards is another possibility that may be explored. A case for alternative teacher education program streams could be considered for nontraditional, second-career applicants.

This would invite second-career candidates as sources and creators of knowledge and take advantage of their lived and work experience as they share with first-career teacher candidates. Extended teacher education programs, such as Brock University's "Enterprise Program," would go far in encouraging, acknowledging, and providing opportunities to use the professional experience of this demographic and help to ease the apprehensions these candidates hold concerning their transition to teaching.

Experienced second-career candidates could offer schools a cadre of mature teacher candidates (Serow & Forrest, 1994). Second-career learners, as Cross (1981) has suggested, have a strong motivation to learn coupled with a defined desire to co-operate. This would require concrete recognition by program providers that second-career applicants have the maturity and wisdom that comes from life experiences. A more flexible approach in teaching methodologies should be considered that would associate and align practical teaching relevance with experiential life history. Such programs would stream academically qualified candidates quickly into practica where andragogical principles of direct application would be more beneficial. Such programs would recognize and build on previous acquired strengths and stress connecting and bridging previous life and work knowledge to teaching practices. This may go far in narrowing the

perceived gap between theory and practice for second-career candidates. Once these andragogical principles are realized, then second-career teacher candidates could be regarded as important members of the academic community with significant contributions to make to the teaching profession. Instead, the lack of andragogical support for these teacher candidates constitutes a loss for students of the continuity, experience, and expertise that these candidates bring to the classroom (Brember et al., 2002; Hill, 1996; McNay, 2001; Milloy, 2003).

Many second-career candidates understand that good associate teachers may be difficult to secure. This was an area of general concern amongst the second-career teacher candidate participants in this study. All 3 participants experienced some measure of discomfort within their practice teaching sessions due in part to incompatibility with their associates. For 2 of the participants, the discomfort centered on the relationship developed with their associates, and they actually considered exiting their respective programs. A more judicious vetting and selection of associate teachers assigned to second-career applicants appears to be necessary in order to ensure greater compatibility and successful learning experiences for this unique homogeneous group.

These findings point to a number of gendered practicum issues that require specific attention and examination. One of these areas is the compatibility of associate teachers and the intervention methodologies of teacher educators to help second-career candidates deal with gender biases that make them feel unwelcome and unwanted. This study suggests that second-career candidates should be removed when there appears to be a lack of agreeability between an associate teacher and a teacher candidate. Such intervention provides the hiatus necessary to decrease stress and apprehension in this

particular demographic and provides a basis for a more positive experience in another opportunity.

Teacher education programs would benefit from the development of gender-oriented courses, sensitizing first- and second-career adult males to the nuances of working in a primarily female-dominated environment. This would especially help second-career teacher candidates adjust to a different work environment and feel less marginalized in employment contexts where they are not in the positions of power and control as they might have been in their previous occupations.

As well, there should be a shift of emphasis in teacher education course delivery recognizing that mature candidates, because of their previous work history, are used to planning, presenting, and learning independently. As independent learners they are used to setting their own timelines and are not always accustomed to the networking approaches common in the present teacher education courses. All 3 research participants in this case study expressed ambivalent feelings about participating in group projects and work. As mature students they were motivated to complete projects and research assignments independently. The participants in this study resented the loss of time spent in delegation activities and the expenditure of energy required to follow up on group members. During collaborative group activities, each participant noted that he withdrew from the active process in order to let the majority rule and continue with as little delay as possible. Second-career male teacher candidates resented the loss of time required to work within these collaborative structures, especially loss of time engendered by students perceived as less committed than themselves to their programs.

Some associate teachers who have mentored only first-career candidates may be unprepared to mentor second-career candidates. Associates tend to support second-career teacher candidates with the same formative mindset as they would first-career candidates (Freidus, 1994, p. 4). The findings of this study suggest that associate teachers of second-career candidates should be provided with additional training and information to help them meet the specialized andragogical concerns of second-career teacher candidates. To ensure positive practicum experiences, it is essential that associate teachers be provided with some andragogical theory that will aid them in understanding the ways that adults, especially second-career adults, learn. It is important that associates recognize the distinction between first- and second-career candidates and structure their practicum experiences accordingly.

### *Implications for Theory*

This study builds on the previous works by researchers (e.g., Drudy et al., 2005; Freidus, 1992; Freidus & Krasnow, 1991; Kouri, 2000; Neapolitan, 1996; Novak & Knowles, 1992; McNay, 2001; Serow & Forrest, 1994) who have focussed on the motivations and experiences of second-career teacher candidates and the issues they experienced in teacher education programs. Drudy et al. stated that “the universality of the under representation of men in teaching at the primary/elementary levels is problematic in a historical, psychological, and sociological sense” (p. 17). Participants in this study confirmed a number of psychological and sociological factors documented in the current literature on the subject of second-career teacher candidates. Further, Prentice (1990) provides examples of how the issues faced by this homogeneous group in modern times have similar historical and contextual associations with adult male teacher



candidates who attended the normal training schools in the Ontario of the 1800s. What is interesting in this specific demographic of second-career teacher candidates is their intense commitment to the work and their decisions to complete their programs in spite of a number of negative factors, such as layered bureaucracy (Hendricken, 2002), factional tensions (Drudy et al.), control and program issues (Freidus & Krasnow, 1991), loss of societal prestige (Coulter & McNay, 1993), and the low pay associated with new teachers entering the profession (Jamieson, 2005). The commitment of these participants to teaching was a calling they felt they needed to heed at this time in their lives. Teaching was considered as a vocation of substance where a difference could be made and where these participants could be of service.

Brookfield (1995), Dewey (1938), and Knowles (1980) all draw our attention to the fact that learning should begin from where the student is positioned. Second-career teacher candidates enter teacher education programs as experienced apprentices. They come to their programs as adults and do not expect to be treated as novices. Knowles and Cross (1981) inform us that, as adults, they may be responding to a number of external factors, but significantly their strongest motivations are internal. These motivations were clearly articulated by the participants in this study, who sought increased job satisfaction, enhanced self-esteem, and a quality of life beyond the values articulated in other corporate ethics. What appeared to be of significance in this study group was the lack of understanding demonstrated by program providers of the psychological and learning orientations they required as second-career adult candidates. Program providers appeared to structure their programs in response to external fiscal concerns that related to the majority student demographic more interested in a formative pedagogy. When working

with this specific homogenous group, program providers did not appear to recognize the importance of internal self-fulfillment considerations, such as the desire to be of service, or to change the meaning of work, motivating these second-career study participants to transition to teaching. Program providers appeared to ignore adult learning theory suggesting and recognizing that good education for adults begins from where the student is positioned.

Could the use of a sound andragogically based teaching methodology draw into teacher education programs a greater percentage of second-career candidates and retain them? In order to do so, a certain rapprochement is necessary between exponents of pedagogical and andragogical theory, especially in teacher education programs. Universities need to recognize that their student body is made up not only of first-career candidates but of an increasing number of second-career candidates who bring with them a variety of experience and expertise that necessitate a different educational experience for them.

Programs of teacher education need to shift their philosophical boundaries by recognizing that formative competencies that are currently taught appear redundant to those students with sufficient subject and experiential expertise. Teacher education programs are more attractive to second-career applicants if they recognize prior learning and experience and attach credit weight through some form of prior learning assessments or other comparative design.

### *Implications for Further Research*

In a society that appears to place little value on age and experience, the second-career adult teacher candidate continues to appear as an anomaly within the current

educational system. Drudy et al. (2005) point out that “historical patterns (concerning teaching) are being repeated, but at the same time societal views about teaching as well as socialization into teaching are being renegotiated” (p. 15). Second-career candidates appear to be a part of this ongoing renegotiation and could be “a major event in the shaping of the teacher labour force for decades to come” (Serow & Forrest, 1994, p. 555). One of the participants in this study expressed surprise at the high intake number of second-career candidates attending his teacher education program. Further studies identifying the positive contributions that second-career adults presently make to teaching could shed light on new and upcoming educational trends.

First-career applicants in teacher education programs are usually incepted in traditional ways and are supported by a peer culture “that shapes their habits, knowledge, and values” (Donaldson & Graham, 1999, pp. 30-31). For many first-career teacher candidates, the practica are their initiation into teaching (Ralston et al., 2000). The second-career teacher candidates in this study stated that they did not seem to experience the same degree of overt apprehension as their first-career colleagues towards their teacher education programs. They also felt that they exhibited a certain amount of reflective judgment because of a wider range of lived experience. This seems to indicate that second-career candidates view classroom differently from first-career candidates (Donaldson & Graham) even though they may be equally capable. This may be because the participants in this study identified and engaged in a process of reflection, a response enforced by external social stimuli in their lives. Mezirow (1990) has stated that reflective judgement is a characteristic usually found in the domain of mature adults and less likely to be encountered in children, youth, or even young adults. Dewey (1933)

contended that reflection is a form of problem solving. The participants, after being engaged in this personal reflective stage, developed for themselves a number of defined and reasoned schemas justifying their career transitions. Future studies examining the importance of reflective judgements in the transition process of second-career males could shed light and understanding as to why education was chosen as opposed to other available career choices.

For second-career adults called to teaching there is a feeling of disequilibrium with the world in which they are living and working. Studies exploring the nature and social causes of such disequilibrium could add significantly to our understanding of why second-career adults choose education. What is it about the need to serve that draws second-career applicants to this process over another which is equally service oriented? Are there specific personality types that are associated with each second-career applicant? Are there certain career orientations predisposing second-career adults to consider teaching as a desirable professional alternative?

For first-career candidates, teacher education programs are the beginning of their professional lives and identities. But for second-career candidates, these programs are a reformation of their professional lives and identities. Teacher education is one of the many tools that second-career teacher candidates use for constructing their new identities. Personal growth, for second-career adults, can be measured by the loss of an old career identity and the assumption of another that is more in tune with their personal life cycle rhythm. Life experience, according to Harris (2004), remains a common asset among second-career teachers. Many second-career candidates appear to be renegotiating the meaning of work and in doing so are opting for careers that provide personal meaning

and an opportunity to contribute to society. The process of career renegotiation presents a number of dynamics yet to be explored, studied, and shared.

This study found that a number of problems were incurred by the second-career adults during their teaching practica. Issues in this particular demographic centered around marginality and power brokered between them and their associate teachers. A more encompassing study of practicum issues could shed light on how prevalent these problems are with this group of teacher candidates. Such a study could define the nature of the problems that exist and provide suggestions that could inform teacher educators to some of the differences that exist for second-career candidates within teacher education programs. Further study and exploration beyond the scope of this thesis are recommended to discern not only the extent of such occurrences with second-career candidates but the nature and reasons that such dynamics exist between associate teachers and their second-career teacher candidates.

It would be interesting to produce expanded case studies that explore the personality characteristics of second-career adults that transition to teaching. Understanding the phenomena of second-career adults' transitions to teaching would benefit from such profiles of the personality types and gender that pursue teacher education programs. These case studies could collect information of the various career sectors from which these adults come and provide detailed descriptions of their first-career responsibilities in relation to teaching applicability.

This study revealed a reality of teacher education that might have otherwise not been exposed. The problems encountered by these 3 second-career candidates during their practice teaching sessions were disinviting. There appeared to be no reciprocal

communication between the associate and the teacher candidate. Purkey and Novak (1996) point out that reciprocal communication “is an effort to establish cooperative inter-action” (p. 10). Ironically, teaching is a profession that philosophically sees itself as invitational and inclusive in nature. In a profession avowing equality and fairness, George faced what he described as recurring denigration that made him look and feel like an idiot in front of a classroom full of students. Jim was accused of an impropriety and duly investigated, but the accusation was found to be unwarranted. Robert found himself experiencing high levels of negative and deep-seated resentment from a number of long-standing teachers concerning issues of work with children. An in-depth case study of second-career teachers within their practica may uncover other concerns that greatly impact practicum success. Such a study could reveal the degree of prevalence to which such issues are apparent in the profession.

Other case studies of associate teachers could shed light on the concerns and problems that they face when working with second-career teacher candidates. An expanded inquiry would provide an alternative lens from the one used within this study. This inquiry could include the views and perceptions of male and female associates that have mentored second-career candidates in their careers. Their observations and recommendations would provide invaluable insight and help second-career candidates to be successful in transitioning into teaching and could possibly enhance their retention rates among this demographic.

### **Conclusion**

This case study was driven by the researcher’s own transition into teaching, his prior and subsequent experiences as an occasional teacher, and his experiences working

within the profession on letters of government permission. The questions that were posed concerned his transition to teaching and revealed, through case study, other dimensions of the inquiry. As a former second-career teacher candidate, and now a teacher certified to teach in the provinces of Ontario, Saskatchewan, and Newfoundland, I was in a unique position to interview this homogeneous group of case study participants. I felt that I had a unique responsibility to ensure that the voices of this demographic were heard and that their perceptions be discussed openly in the community that binds us all. For these reasons, my own experiences were held “*en epoche*” (Bednal, 2006) from the data provided by the participants in this study. This was accomplished by offering what Stake (1995) has called thick descriptions which are “the particular perceptions of the actors and not the complexities of the case objectively described” (p. 42).

In many ways this research and case study have brought me full circle in understanding of many of the issues I encountered in my own teacher education program. Along the way not only has existing literature been supported or rejected, but more important, new questions have arisen that are problematic and specific to the demographic under study. What dynamics are at work that make second-career candidates acquiesce rather than prolong confrontations during the teacher education programs? Are there higher social and personal expectations for older candidates? Are there different expectations placed upon them by associates who may treat second-career candidates differently from first-career candidates? Is it fair and opportunistic of teacher educators to continue to place such candidates in programs that are somewhat discordant with their experience and learning styles?

Stake (1995) informs us that meaning “is often a search for patterns, for consistency within certain conditions, and that important meanings are derived from consistent reappearance” (p. 78). As such, the participants in this case study offer insights that shed light on a number of commonly reoccurring patterns, some of which have been articulated in previous research and others which are new. The use of formative pedagogical methods on second-career adults who are responsible for their own decisions and who have a psychological need to be seen and treated as capable does not appear to suit the learning process of this particular demographic. Participants spoke of the frustrations inherent in the application processes as well as the search for relevance in program curriculum and presentation methods. Candidates in this study did not express or feel that their previous life work, experiences, or skills were valued during their teacher education programs; these are all necessary components for all adult learners (Shannon & Bergdoll, 1998).

Second-career candidates, as adults, need to know why they need to learn something prior to undertaking to learn it (Knowles, 1974). In most cases, they have already made the transition from dependent to self-directed learning, and perhaps a more andragogical approach suggested by the works of Knowles (1974, 1975) would change the subject orientation of teacher education programs to a more life-centered orientation. This would recognize that, as adults, second-career candidates are not only responsive to external pressures but have stronger internal motivators centered in the recognition of their desire for increased job satisfaction, self-esteem, and quality of life (Knowles, 1975).



Considering the limitations of case study research it should be borne in mind that this study represents 3 second-career males. Findings may be attributed to the fact that this was their second-career or to other socio-economic characteristics such as gender, age, class, race, ethnicity, culture, and/or sexual orientation. Stake (1978) states that case study is “an expansionist rather than a reductionist pursuit ...one is left with more rather than less to pay attention to (p. 7).”

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**Appendix A**  
**Email Questionnaire**

1. Demographic Information

Age:

22 – 32                      [ ]

32 – 42                      [ ]

42 – 52                      [ ]

52 – 62                      [ ]

62 – 72                      [ ]

2. Previous Career (indicate the number of years)

Business                      [ ]

Education                      [ ]

Trades                      [ ]

Engineering                      [ ]

Sales                      [ ]

Technology                      [ ]

Manufacturing [ ]

Other                      [ ]

Specify-----



3. What were the reasons that drew you to teaching as a possible second career?
4. What challenges did you face as a second-career male teacher candidate prior to starting your pre-service program? (An example could be acquiring financial arrangements.)

Could you elaborate on some of these personal challenges?

5. Describe the most positive experience you had during your pre-service teacher education program. (An example might be the first time you felt totally comfortable in front of the class you were teaching.)
6. Describe what you would consider was the most negative experience you had during your pre-service teacher education program.
7. In your opinion, how are the needs and requirements of **second-career** male teacher candidates different from **first-career** male candidates?

## Appendix B

### Participant's First Interview Protocol

1. Thinking back to when you were considering becoming a teacher, what was it that interested you the most about teaching?

What interested you personally about teaching?

Did you have any professional interest or reasons in seeking to become a teacher?

2. What did your family think about your wanting to become a teacher? How did these comments make you feel?

What family member had the most significant input into your decision to become a teacher?

What family member was the most positive about your decision to become a teacher?

What family member was the most negative about your decision to become a teacher?

3. Describe the pre-service application procedure. Was it frustrating or smooth? If it was frustrating, how could it have been made more helpful?

4. Were your classes and courses mostly made up of female teacher candidates? How did this make you feel?

5. Were your counsellors/advisors helpful in resolving issues you encountered in the program or practice practicums? If so, please describe the support that they provided for you. If not, how could they have been more helpful and supportive?

Could you elaborate on the issues that were the most significant for you during the pre-service teacher education program?

Were these issues more personal or professional in context?

How were these issues resolved successfully?

Were your counsellors and advisors helpful or unhelpful during this process?

What could they have done to help mitigate the issues you faced?

6. Which of the following did you most often draw on during the pre-service program?

a) Your previous life experience?

b) Your previous work experience?

Elaborate on why your previous experience was so useful to you.

What did your friends think about your wanting to become a teacher? How did these comments make you feel?

7. Think of what you would regard as the highlight of your pre-service program. Describe this aspect and explain why you regard it as a highlight.

8. As a second-career male, what improvements would you recommend be made to the pre-service program that could help future second-career candidates?

What would you change in respect to coursework that would make it more conducive to second-career males?

Would you change anything in the way the pre-service teacher education program is structured to make it more inclusive for males?

How could the teaching methods be improved for second-career males?

9. What was the reaction of the co-workers in your first career when informed that you were considering a career transition to teaching?

Was most of the reaction positive or negative?

Did any attempt to dissuade you from transitioning to teaching?

10. Overall, how would you rate, on a scale of one to five, your experience in the pre-service program (one being a totally negative experience and five being a totally positive experience). What is the single most influential factor that contributes to this rating?

## Appendix C

### Protocol for Second Interview Questions

1. How many first-career males participated in your pre-service teacher education program?

How many second-career males were part of your cohort?

How many first-career females were in the program with you?

Were there any second-career females in this program also?

Did being a male in such a dominantly female cohort present any problems?

If so how did you deal with the problems that did arise in order to successfully resolve them?

2. As a mature pre-service teacher education student you indicated that you had had some issues with the program you attended.

Could you share in more detail what some of these issues were?

How did you contend with these concerns?

Were your concerns resolved to your satisfaction?

How could they have been better resolved?

3. As an adult learner and teacher candidate were you ever frustrated with the teaching methods used by your program instructors and / or your associate teacher during your practicum training periods?

Could you elaborate on the sources of these frustrations?

Did you find the methods used to teach in the pre-service teacher education program suitable to your learning style?

As an older male candidate, did you find that the issues that arose were the result of the teaching methods employed by the pre-service program facilitators?

How did you manage to deal with and mitigate these issues?

4. Do second-career male teacher candidates have teaching and learning needs that are significantly different from first-career male candidates?

Could you outline what you perceive those needs to be?

How could pre-service teacher education programs attend to those significant needs in ways that are inclusive to second-career males?

5. In your opinion, would the implementation of more adult teaching methods in pre-service teacher education programs appeal and attract a greater number of second-career male teachers?

What would be the most beneficial program change that would make second-career males entertain teaching as a profession?

In your opinion, what is the greatest deterrent to second-career males wanting to teach?

6. Do second-career males bring anything significant to the teaching?

What, in your opinion, do second-career males bring that is different or exceptional?

Is teaching impacted positively or negatively by the presence of males in the teaching profession?

What are some of the negative aspects of having second-career males in the teaching profession?

Should male teachers be teaching in the primary grades?

Are male teachers significant role models for male students? Do you think male students are impacted in any way by having males in the teaching profession?

7. Was there any impact in any of the relationships you had at home, at work, or in your social network, as you were progressing through the pre-service teacher education program?

Could you share with us what some of these changes were?

8. What advice would you give to a second-career male who might be considering a transition to teaching?

If you had the opportunity to attend a pre-service teacher education program a second time, would you do it again?

Would you or do you have any regrets about having attended a teacher education pre-service program?

9. In the first interview you indicated that you would change a few things in teacher education programs if you had the power to do so.

Could you be a little more specific about the changes you would entertain?

How do you think that this would make the programs better for second-career male candidates?

Do you think it would have the added benefit of attracting more second-career males to teacher training programs?

10. How was your previous work and life experience beneficial to you before, during, and after your pre-service teacher education program?

Were these experiences validated for you during your specific program?

How could your program have legitimized your work and lived experience during your teacher education program?



**Brock**  
University

Office of Research Services  
Research Ethics Office  
St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada L2S 3A1  
T: 905-688-5550, Ext. 3035/4876 F: 905-688-0748

[www.brocku.ca](http://www.brocku.ca)

## Appendix D

### Research Ethics Board Clearance

DATE: March 31, 2006

FROM: Linda Rose-Krasnor, Chair  
Research Ethics Board (REB)

TO: Tiffany Gallagher, Education  
John Gadoua

FILE: 05-253 GADOUA

TITLE: Second Career Males: Issues Encountered in the Pursuit of and Integration in Pre-Service Programs

The Brock University Research Ethics Board has reviewed the above research proposal.

**DECISION:** Accepted as clarified.

This project has received ethics clearance for the period of March 31, 2006 to April 22, 2006 subject to full REB ratification at the Research Ethics Board's next scheduled meeting. The clearance period may be extended upon request. ***The study may now proceed.***

Please note that the Research Ethics Board (REB) requires that you adhere to the protocol as last reviewed and cleared by the REB. During the course of research no deviations from, or changes to, the protocol, recruitment, or consent form may be initiated without prior written clearance from the REB. The Board must provide clearance for any modifications before they can be implemented. If you wish to modify your research project, please refer to <http://www.brocku.ca/researchservices/forms> to complete the appropriate form **Revision or Modification to an Ongoing Application.**

Adverse or unexpected events must be reported to the REB as soon as possible with an indication of how these events affect, in the view of the Principal Investigator, the safety of the participants and the continuation of the protocol.

If research participants are in the care of a health facility, at a school, or other institution or community organization, it is the responsibility of the Principal Investigator to ensure that the ethical guidelines and clearance of those facilities or institutions are obtained and filed with the REB prior to the initiation of any research protocols.

The Tri-Council Policy Statement requires that ongoing research be monitored. A Final Report is required for all projects upon completion of the project. Researchers with projects lasting more than one year are required to submit a Continuing Review Report annually. The Office of Research Services will contact you when this form **Continuing Review/Final Report** is required.

Please quote your REB file number on all future correspondence.

LRK/bb